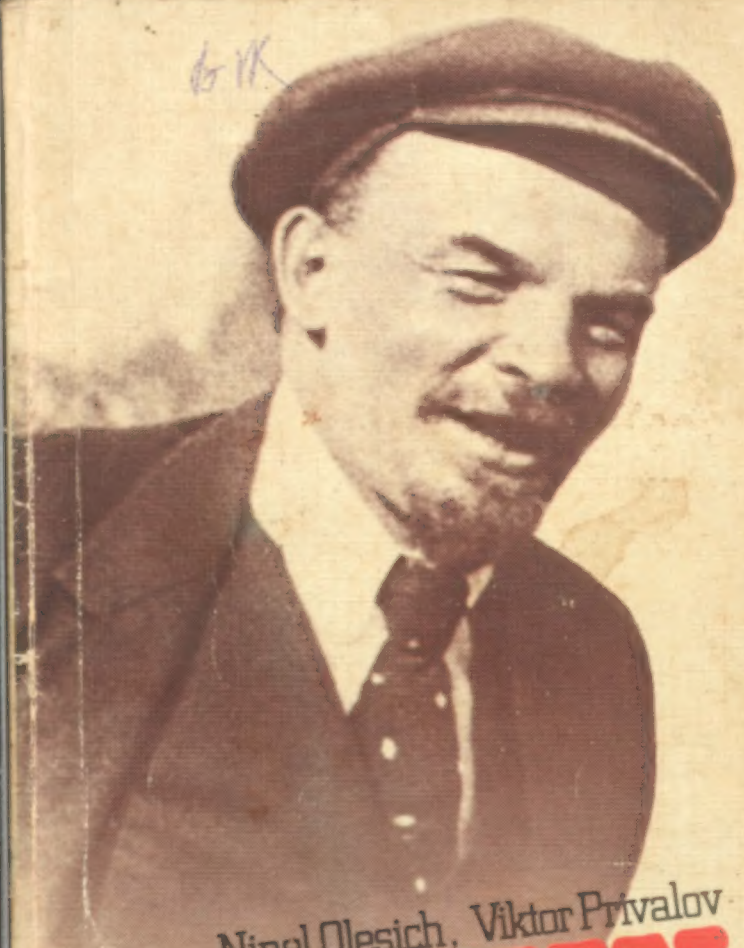


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Ninel Olesich, Viktor Privalov

LENIN
ON STUDENTS
IN REVOLUTION

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INTRODUCTION

Vladimir Ilyich Lenin, founder of the Soviet state, gave a vivid picture of the revolutionary struggle of Russian students in his works.

When a Marxist party was being formed in Russia Vladimir Lenin pointed out the great revolutionary potential of Russian students. He maintained that students were the part of the intelligentsia most responsive to revolution. In 1901 he wrote:

"The best representatives of our educated classes have proved—and sealed the proof with the blood of thousands of revolutionaries tortured to death by the government—their ability and readiness to shake from their feet the dust of bourgeois society and join the ranks of the socialists."¹

Lenin remarked that the ultimate basis of the political grouping of students is the class division of society. "...*In the final analysis*, of course," he wrote, "it always determines that grouping."²

The largest section of the intelligentsia in general, and of students in particular, came from the petty bourgeoisie. For this reason Lenin emphasized the ability of the intelligentsia, including

¹ V. Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 4, p. 418.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. 7, p. 46.

students, to express not the narrow interests of the "upper crust" of the bourgeoisie, but the "interests of the masses of the petty bourgeoisie and the peasantry".³ In criticizing the vacillating character of the mass of students, he expressed the view that, given working class support, students could actively contribute to the revolutionary struggle.

Lenin demanded that his comrades-in-arms in the party should exhibit a dialectical approach to the student movement, that they should take account of its complex and contradictory character and its dependence on the revolutionary activity of various social groups. He resolutely opposed those who turned the active leadership of the student protest movement into "a lifeless dogma, mechanically applied to different stages of different forms of the movement".⁴ Replying to such "theorists" he wrote, "It is not of course a question of us dividing every student movement beforehand into compulsory 'stages', and making sure that each stage is properly gone through, out of fear of switching over to 'untimely' political actions, etc. Such a view would be the most harmful pedantry, and would lead only to an opportunist policy."⁵

Lenin also argued against those who committed the opposite error, just as harmful, "...when people refuse to reckon with the actual situation that has arisen and the actual conditions of the particular mass movement, because of a slogan misinterpreted as unchangeable. Such an application of a slogan inevitably degenerates into revolutionary phrase-mongering".⁶

³ V. Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 9, p. 215.

⁴ *Ibid.* Vol. 15, p. 215.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ *Ibid.*

Lenin's ideological heritage and the historical experience of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in drawing students into revolutionary struggle hold international significance. Lenin's thesis of the need to display a differentiated approach towards students who include representatives of various social sections and political groupings is of particular importance today.

The struggle of the progressive student youth against imperialism is becoming an important factor of public life in many capitalist countries. It reflects the grave crisis of present-day bourgeois society. The Main Document issued by the International Meeting of the Communist and Workers' Parties held in Moscow in 1969 stated, "Broad masses of students take a stand not only against the defects of the obsolete system of education and for the right to organize and share actively in the affairs of educational centres but also against the policy of the ruling classes... growing numbers of young people actively participate in major mass actions against imperialism, for democracy, peace and socialism."⁷

The working class, which is the vanguard of all revolutionary forces, is seeking to understand more deeply the causes underlying the student protest movement, in order to determine more clearly the role of students in society and the revolutionary process, and to win students over to its side. Guided by Lenin's ideas and collectively worked out decisions, the Communists rally the youth around their banner and bring Lenin's idea to the masses that "only close unity with the work-

⁷ *International Meeting of the Communist and Workers' Parties*, Moscow, 1969, p. 26.

ing-class movement and its Communist vanguard can open for them truly revolutionary prospects".⁸

The authors of this book wish to acquaint the reader with the first bourgeois-democratic revolution of 1905-1907 in Russia, which was a bright page in the history of the Russian revolutionary movement, and through its events to show how Lenin and the Bolshevik Party headed by him sought to win over the revolutionary students to their side.

⁸ V. Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 15, p. 27.

ESTABLISHING CONTACTS WITH THE WORKING CLASS

The revolutionary activity of Russian students can be understood if we examine the class essence of the tsarist regime and the tsarist government's reactionary policy in the sphere of higher education.

An atmosphere of discontent and protest among Russian students was brewing for a number of reasons: the stifling conditions of autocratic Russia, its cruel treatment of the young, scorn for knowledge, the introduction of police and barracks regulations at educational establishments, the denial of political rights, and the dire poverty suffered by most students.

Russia's rapid industrial development late in the 19th century and the soaring demand for skilled workers brought about far-reaching changes in the social structure of society. As Lenin put it, capitalism was demanding an increasing number of intellectuals. The social make-up of towns and cities in the Russian Empire was being transformed, the number of people living on wages was increasing and the composition of the intelligentsia was undergoing a change.

New economic processes were accompanied by the growth of the intelligentsia, which in the past

had formed only a small section of society. It was becoming numerically strong and its representatives were filling positions in the state apparatus.

The intelligentsia centered in St. Petersburg and Moscow. Nearly a half of all scientists, writers, painters, actors and teachers representing the huge army of low-paid Russian intellectuals lived in these two cultural centres of Russia.

While in its economic policy tsarism was forced to reckon with the interests of rising capitalism, in the sphere of ideology, however, particularly in higher education, it sought to preserve its conservative ways. However, under the impact of capitalism, the narrow-caste system of higher education of the nobility was forced to give way to one embracing all strata of the population.

Early in the 20th century the number of students increased considerably. In 1903 there were 85 higher education establishments in Russia with an attendance of 42,884. About ten years later, in the 1914/1915 academic year, the country's 105 higher education establishments enrolled 127,400 students.

The ranks of the students were being reinforced with young people from the lower sections of society, namely certain groups of peasantry, urban middle classes, clergy and petty officials. A sizable part of the student body, however, consisted of people who originated from privileged classes. On January 1, 1905, children of the gentry and civil servants accounted for 60.92 per cent of all students attending St. Petersburg university, one of Russia's largest seats of learning. Among them students from the families of aristocrats and big landlords were not so common as they tended to study at closed schools for the gentry.

Most of the students were children of low-ranking civil servants, small gentry or gentry only by title. Among them there were quite a few capable, hard-working people who were often in straitened circumstances. They frequently joined those who fostered revolutionary sentiments at the universities. Thus, out of all the students arrested for revolutionary activities in 1902, 3.7 per cent were children of civil servants, 12.8 per cent of merchants, 15.1 per cent of urban lower middle class families, 15.7 per cent of peasants and 32.4 per cent of the gentry.

Although, as in the past, students from the families of gentry and civil servants constituted the majority of the student body, students not belonging to the gentry already made up a sizable part. They came from ruined gentry families, the families of low-standing civil servants, the petty bourgeoisie, rural clergy and peasants. As Lenin put it, these students were tied to the broad masses of the people by "thousands and millions of threads".⁹

Students in Russia were living in extremely difficult circumstances. The life of a Russian student was practically no different from the wretched existence of the lowest urban sections.

In the 1899/1900 academic year 53.2 per cent of Moscow university students barely made ends meet. In 1901 the number of those in need of financial help at the philological department of Moscow university was 62.27 per cent, at the mathematical department—50.21 per cent, and at the medical department—60.73 per cent. These are extremely understated figures produced by the Inspectorate. The number of needy students at veterinary and agricultural institutes, teachers' semi-

⁹ V. Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 15, p. 218.

naries, and schools of doctor's assistants was even greater.

Statistics show that access to educational establishments and faculties intended for training specialists on a mass scale (for filling up low-paid jobs) was easier for young people from the lower strata. This was the case with the medical, mathematical and philological departments at Moscow university. They mainly trained secondary school teachers and doctors¹⁰.

Georgi Valentinovich Plekhanov, the distinguished Russian Marxist, said that quiet mental work for a Russian student was a great luxury. He wrote: "In summer he would leave the city for a 'well-paid' coaching job (usually with board); in winter he would run from work to lectures and back to giving lessons; very often he was forced to help his parents, brothers and sisters." Such was the life of a student in those days. When Nadezhda Konstantinovna Krupskaya, wife and comrade of Lenin, recalled Lenin's ascetic way of life in St. Petersburg in 1894-1895 she wrote that he "...lived like a student in a small room, spending very little on himself".¹¹

Commenting on a survey of the housing conditions of Moscow students, *Rech*, a paper published in the capital, wrote: "If, as pessimists say, the whole world is a prison, the room of a student is a solitary confinement cell in this prison."

Only three per cent of students in Moscow had flats. The rest had to rent rooms, shared with several people.

¹⁰ In 1896 to 1911 the number of primary school teachers increased by approximately 70 per cent and of doctors by 61 per cent.

¹¹ See *Lenin in St. Petersburg. On the Basis of Memoirs of Contemporaries and Documents*, Moscow, 1972, Russ. Ed., p. 252.

Meanwhile the government regularly increased tuition fees. This was a way of excluding the non-propertied classes from the universities. In the period from 1887 to 1898 the fees rose from 10 to 50 roubles. On the eve of the revolution of 1905 they reached 100 roubles a year.

With every year the outlay for stipends was reduced. In 1899 only 6.1 per cent of the students of Kazan University were receiving stipends. In 1904 their number dropped to 4.3 per cent. Moreover, in distributing stipends the administration of higher education establishments was more interested in the applicant's political loyalty than his material conditions.

In their effort to isolate higher education establishments from democratic circles and in emphasizing a conservative-scholastic spirit in instruction the tsarist government sought to win over the teaching staff to their side. To achieve this end the tsarist government provided professors with relatively high wages.

In material terms professors were far better off than other representatives of the urban intelligentsia. With their assistance, the tsarist state machine introduced a system of surveillance and police control over students in higher education establishments.

In the archives there is a copy of a handwritten magazine *Zabastovka* (Strike) put out by students in Novorossiisk. It was sent in 1901 to *Iskra*¹². The magazine carried a cartoon showing a professor reading a lecture to students, while a gendarme officer, hidden behind the rostrum, acted as prompter.

¹² *Iskra*, first all Russia political Marxist paper published illegally.

Having placed the universities under the supervision of the police, the tsarist government in fact also did away with academic freedom and deprived the teaching staff of their corporate "self-administration". The minister alone had the right to appoint staff to vacant posts, distribute chairs and confer scientific degrees.

At the turn of the century the government introduced a series of "reforms" at higher schools aiming to bolster up the reactionary set-up in the citadels of science. These "reforms" deprived the students of the right to assembly. Students could no longer set up student associations, even scientific ones, nor could they put out any publications.

Special measures were taken to place educational establishments under "special guard". As a result, a barracks regime reigned in them. Police officers, informers, spies and provocateurs virtually flooded institutes and universities. Police surveillance and the denunciation of "suspects" were elevated to the level of state policy. A letter sent by students to the editors of *Iskra* is informative. It reported on an order which Sipyagin, Minister of the Interior, had issued, commending nine St. Petersburg university students for fulfilling "police and detective duties" within the university. The Tsar himself approved of the order and endorsed it with his own hand: "Have read it with pleasure."

The Minister for Public Education issued instructions that secondary school principals should provide "complete and detailed information" on the views of their former students (if they should apply for entry into universities), the circumstances of their parents and an analysis of their social environment. A special clause deprived graduates of teachers' seminaries who were mainly of peasant origin of the right to enter universities. University

rules imposed a strict ban on the admission of women into higher education establishments. As far as representatives of non Russian nationalities were concerned, their entry into secondary and higher education establishments was strictly limited by quotas for each educational institution. For instance, representatives of the indigenous population of Siberia accounted for only 0.3-1 per cent of the student body of the university and the technological institute in Tomsk.

Although autocracy resorted to such reactionary measures, it failed to "exorcise" the revolutionary spirit from higher education establishments.

Of course, the social-political causes of student ferment were rooted in the people. The democratic youth movement brought the people's protest against the power of the tsar and landlords to educational establishments. Furthermore, dire poverty and constant police harassment of the youth completed the moulding of revolutionary-minded students within the universities who after graduation became the bearers of hatred for the existing social and political system and a desire to fight it. That was why the citadels of science became the first schools of revolutionary struggle for many democratically-minded young people.

Students of common birth, the children of low-ranking officials, who were known in Russia as *raznochintsy*¹³ (intellectuals not belonging to the gentry), sought to devote themselves to the service of science and the people. In the 1870s students entered the revolutionary movement under the impact

¹³ The term *raznochinets* acquired not only a social, but a political meaning. It was used synonymously with the term "democrat". The *raznochintsy* produced a whole generation of revolutionaries who fought against the power of the Tsar.

of European Utopian socialism, influenced by the ideas of Robert Owen, Saint-Simon, Fourier and Proudhon, and those of the Russian democrats, Herzen and Chernyshevsky.

The ideas of petty-bourgeois socialism exercised a decisive influence on the stand adopted by most of the student organizations. Because of their failure to comprehend the historic mission of the working class, forward-thinking students set off for villages, in order to enlighten the peasants and incite them to rebel against the tsar. Sincerely devoted to the ideal of revolution they claimed for themselves the role of "heroes". They regarded the people as a "crowd" which they alone could mobilize into action.

In his article *The Role of Social Estates and Classes in the Liberation Movement* Lenin mentioned the outstanding revolutionary role of students and other intellectuals. But he also pointed out that this movement was divorced from the struggle of the masses of people. In Lenin's view it was characterized by the "greatness of heroism" and "impotence". Depicting the difficult road of the development of revolutionary movement, Lenin wrote: "Russia achieved Marxism—the only correct revolutionary theory—through the *agony* she experienced in the course of half a century of unparalleled torment and sacrifice, of unparalleled revolutionary heroism, incredible energy, devoted searching, study, practical trial, disappointment, verification, and comparison with European experience."¹⁴

When the Russian revolutionary movement entered the social democratic stage in the 1880s, the character of student action changed.

¹⁴ V. Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 31, pp. 25-26.

Lenin's book *What the "Friends of the People" Are and How They Fight the Social-Democrats* played a significant role in the students' political education. The book was illegally printed by the students themselves. In his memoirs N. A. Semashko, then a student and Lenin's comrade-in-arms, wrote that when the student youth read the manuscript of Lenin's book, "...the Marxist trend among students began to take definite shape". The students made well-aimed attacks at the petty-bourgeois socialists by using the wealth of facts and ideas Lenin had equipped them with.

In 1895 a League of Struggle for the Emancipation of the Working Class was founded in St. Petersburg on Lenin's initiative. It played a tremendous role in the revolutionary education of forward-thinking students. This was an organization of a completely new type in Russia. Under the guidance of the League, Marxists switched over from work in narrow circles to mass political propaganda work among the workers. Young people helped the League, published its works, stored and spread illegal literature, acted as contacts or even simply as collectors of money for the organization's treasury. The St. Petersburg League of Struggle proved to be an excellent school of class struggle for many Marxist-minded students. It showed how to switch from Marxist propaganda work in narrow circles to mass political and economic propaganda.

Advanced students who sided with the Social Democrats made a positive contribution to the linking of socialism with the working class and to the creation of a Marxist Party in Russia. The work of the forward-thinking students who joined the League of Struggle revealed the multifaceted revolutionary potential of this section of the youth. The fact that many leaders and functionaries of the Marxist Party

started as students meant that they were knowledgeable about the student protest movement and were able to utilize its positive aspects. More than that, they could understand the sentiments and needs of student youth. These regular ties with democratic students subsequently enabled the Bolshevik Party to work out sound strategy and tactics in work with students and to use their revolutionary protest in the interests of the proletariat. As Lenin wrote: "...it is our duty as revolutionary Social-Democrats to exert every effort to take advantage of this development (social protest—*Ed.*), in order to explain to the progressive working-class intellectuals what an ally they have in the peasants, in the students, and in the intellectuals generally, and to teach them how to take advantage of the flashes of social protest that break out, now in one place, now in another."¹⁵

The all-Russia student strike in 1899 with 25,000 students participating marked a turning point in the history of the student movement. For the first time in history non-proletarian youth resorted to a proletarian form of struggle, namely, the strike. The main demand was rather abstract—freedom of the individual.

What prompted young people to take action in defence of human rights in Russia? The event was sparked off on February 8, 1899. At a ceremonial meeting at St. Petersburg university the students vigorously booed the rector, who was a reactionary, and went as far as to make a few disrespectful remarks about the tsar. Then the students decided to march in a column through Nevsky Prospekt. Warned in advance about unrest among the students, the government decided to punish them. The police

¹⁵ V. Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 5, p. 288.

brutally beat up the marchers. On the following day these events were in the focus of public attention in St. Petersburg and later on in the whole country. All of Russia's educational establishments declared a strike under the slogan of freedom of the individual and freedom of speech within the citadels of science.

Assessing the strike later, the United Social-Democratic Organization of Students of St. Petersburg pointed out the complicated and contradictory nature of the action which, "though (objectively) political, . . . was (subjectively) deliberately academic in ideas and means". Progressive-minded students were already on the threshold of political struggle.

The Russian Social Democrats gave support to the students' strike. In addressing student rallies the Social Democrats exposed the policy of tsarist autocracy in public education, trying to dispel any illusions that democratic reforms by the tsarist government would be possible.

However, "economism", an opportunistic trend in Russian Social-Democracy, with its tactics of "staying aloof from politics", inflicted serious harm on the students' struggle and ultimately led to the isolation of the students' movement from the working class and put an end to the strike. Still, the year 1899 was the impulse which made students switch from academic to political forms of struggle. It intensified the process of political differentiation among students. It showed the students that it was not possible to remain isolated from the working class and that it was absolutely necessary to ensure Party guidance of the student movement by the Social Democrats.

The tsarist government realized that the student movement had tremendous social potential. It was

frightened by the prospects of its further growth and tried to conceal its fears from society at large by declaring the students "common trouble makers" who were asking for disciplinary measures. In an attempt to strangle the student movement the tsarist government passed a law under which rebel students "for participation in meetings and disobedience to the authorities, etc." would be conscripted. It was not accidental that the government resorted to this Draconian measure to frighten the students. Even after serfdom had been abolished military service in tsarist Russia was a school of arbitrary rule and violence. Lenin explained that tsarist autocracy took this cruel step because it felt the uncertainty of its position and had faith only in the strength of the bayonet and the whip. However, this reactionary measure could only evoke protest against the entire system of the police and the rule of the fist among the students who were not wallowing in the bog of bourgeois stagnation.

Lenin did not regard the clash between the students and the government as mere student unrest. Student action manifested political protest. Lenin, therefore, drew the conclusion that social-democratic organizations should rally this protest movement and head student action. He wrote: "The students came to the assistance of the workers—the workers must come to the aid of the students."¹⁶

While in 1899 the students had put forward the abstract demand of individual freedom and personal immunity, which was impossible under tsarist autocracy, in 1901-1902 their slogans were more politically concrete and comprehensive, as for instance, "Down with autocracy!" and "We want freedom of speech, assembly and the press!" Student leaflets

¹⁶ V. Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 4, p. 418.

emphasized with increasing clarity the need for going over from academic to political demands, and the importance of joint action with the working class.

Although in aims the movement on the whole was still academic in 1901-1902, it had already adopted the means of political struggle. The students left the university premises and came out into the streets, resorting to demonstrations, a political form of struggle. Having joined hands with the proletariat in demonstrations, the students, though not yet aware of it, had already embarked on the road of revolution.

Iskra, a Leninist paper, made a particularly great contribution to the political education of Russian students. Every issue carried reports on students' actions in Russia's educational establishments. It analyzed leaflets put out by the students and manifestoes of student congresses. It warmly welcomed the desire of progressive young people to work under the leadership of Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party committees. Lenin's first articles devoted to the student movement and the tasks of the Social Democrats were published in *Iskra*. Among these were *The Drafting of 183 Students into the Army*, *The Beginning of Demonstrations*, and *Signs of Bankruptcy*.

Lenin's *Iskra* carried the full text of a student congress manifesto thus emphasizing the importance of the congress decisions for the struggle of the youth. These decisions in actual fact demonstrated the tremendous political growth of the student movement and the desire of a sizable part of the youth to fight under the guidance of the RSDLP. By the spring of 1903, the higher education establishments of St. Petersburg alone had 24 student social-democratic organizations supporting the *Iskra* line.

Lenin's work *What Is to Be Done?* which was put out in March, 1902, played an important role in the political education of students. It equipped progressive-minded students with the fundamentals of a doctrine dealing with a proletarian party of a new type. It proved that the question of such a party is the key question of the working-class movement.

In his book *What Is to Be Done?* Lenin expressed just pride that *Iskra* had raised, at the right time, the problems of democratic struggle, including those of the student youth movement. He wrote that the paper had "urged" the workers to help the students and gave support to the students who had begun to realize the need for waging a political struggle. At the same time it "lashed out at the 'outrageous incomprehension' revealed by the adherents of the 'purely student' movement, who called upon the students to abstain from participating in the street demonstrations".¹⁷

Lenin stressed the success of the paper among progressive-minded students. He pointed out that it played a decisive role in moulding a revolutionary world outlook and in enlisting the youth for political activity. He clearly foresaw the further growth of its revolutionary activity under the influence of Social Democrats. That is why in dealing with the tasks of the proletariat's democratic struggle Lenin regarded progressive students as potential supporters of the working class.

On April 2, 1902, Sipyagin, Minister of the Interior, who won notoriety by his cruel reprisals against the students, was assassinated at Mariinski Palace in St. Petersburg, the seat of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Russian Empire. He was shot by Sergei Balmashev, a twenty-year-old student. He

¹⁷ V. Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 5, p. 436.

executed the death sentence passed by the Fighting Organization of the Party of Socialist Revolutionaries (SRs).¹⁸

A year before Pyotr Karpovich, a former student of Moscow university, mortally wounded Bogolepov, Minister of Public Education and author of the decree on the conscription of rebel students. When arrested he said he was a Socialist Revolutionary. His act won admiration and acclaim among the students. The SRs took this into account, when they recruited members in 1902. Failing to win support on the part of the working people, they concentrated their efforts on the politically innocent student youth who were responsive to calls of revolutionary self-sacrifice.

Addressing the youth the SRs said: "We need to use our guns! We need loud fire along the whole line, otherwise society will be afflicted with stagnation! We need heroes, self-denying apostles of freedom, blood and revenge." Bombs were exploded and pistols were fired. One audacious act of terrorism followed the other. They began to stalk the Emperor, his August relatives, his loyal ministers, generals and high-ranking officials.

Practically in all cases the roles of "apostles" in the bloody performances staged by the SRs were played by students. Many of them behaved like real heroes.

¹⁸ Party of Socialist Revolutionaries, a left-wing bourgeois-democratic party which existed in Russia in the period from 1901 to 1923. Before 1917 it was an illegal party. It expressed the interests of the urban and rural petty bourgeoisie. It started out as a petty-bourgeois revolutionary party, but gradually slipped to the right to form an alliance with bourgeois-landlord counter revolutionaries. After the Great October Socialist Revolution the Socialist Revolutionaries organized anti-Soviet rebellions. After the Civil War the party disintegrated.

But terrorism as a method of revolutionary struggle had a corrupting influence on the student youth. It hindered progressive students in pooling their efforts with the working class.

Individual "heroes" took part in the bloody sensational incidents which attracted numerous admirers. Many young people dreamed of following suit, of doing something "heroic". Who could undertake to shatter the image of the "apostles"? Who would dare to debunk the party that enlisted them? The path the democratic students of Russia would take depended on this. Would they become an ally of the proletariat or only a fertile field nourishing revolutionary adventurism?

At the beginning of the 20th century two political parties—the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party and the petty-bourgeois Party of SRs vied for the leadership of the student movement in Russia.

The petty-bourgeois revolutionary spirit of the SRs constituted a serious threat because the SRs exercised considerable influence on the mass of students.

In the fight for political domination the SRs did their utmost to discredit the policy and tactics of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party. They accused the Social Democrats of not being able to define the role of the intelligentsia, particularly the students, in the revolution. At the same time the SRs claimed to have developed a comprehensive analysis of the question.

In 1901, before the party actually took shape, the "Manifesto of the Party of Socialist Revolutionaries" mentioned the exceptional role played by the intelligentsia in the revolutionary process. The SRs believed that "since the intelligentsia was characterized by a higher cultural level compared with the industrial proletariat and a higher level of political

consciousness", it assimilated their ideas more easily. As the SRs put it, they hoped to recruit from among this intelligentsia "more conscious" and more active elements for their party.

In later years in various SR publications, such as *Revolutionnaya Rossiya* (Revolutionary Russia) and *Vestnik Russkoi Revolyutsii* (Bulletin of the Russian Revolution), the leaders of the party repeatedly tried to substantiate theoretically the vanguard role young Russian intellectuals would play in the Russian revolution.

They asserted that, if a party of revolution did not view reality through the glasses of "economic theory" (here the Socialist Revolutionaries hinted at the alleged political short-sightedness of the Social Democrats), it would be a detachment of well-organized intelligentsia, which had close contacts and even merged with the progressive-minded representatives of the people. As they saw it, this "merger" meant that "ignorant people" would follow in the wake of the socialist intelligentsia that worked and fought for the people. The SRs regarded the entire intelligentsia, and the students who formed a part of it, as a homogeneous mass. They held that the "ideal" motives of struggling against violence, which were common and dear to young people were of a non-class nature. They claimed that it was precisely these "ideal" motives which urged young intellectuals to carry out their heroic mission. According to the SRs this mission could be successful only if all students were ideologically united.

Socialist Revolutionary theoreticians believed that the students would conduct a general political struggle on the basis of a broad organization of all young democratic intellectuals rallied around a revolutionary cause which all democratic students could accept. As far as the party of SRs was concerned, its lead-

ers frankly declared that they hoped to influence the youth without, however, fixing any definite party "tag" to it. In preaching the revolutionary non-party spirit the SRs, Lenin maintained, persistently avoided questions about the political activities of students, which called for the choice of a definite party. This circumstance clearly revealed that the SRs lacked definite scientific convictions and a firm political line. As if illustrating Lenin's ideas SR leaders stubbornly asserted that the youth united on the basis of a socialist, though vague, ideal would be capable of imparting resolve and a definite aim in the fight against tsarism to the "amorphous" mass of the people.

The task of revolutionary struggle and rallying progressive students under the banner of Marxism made it necessary to expose petty-bourgeois opportunism and theoretical and programmatic propositions of Socialist Revolutionaries.

Lenin, who had been familiar with the main ideas of the SRs since 1901, subjected their programme and tactics to sharp criticism. He declared outright that proletarian and petty-bourgeois ideologies were incompatible; he formulated the thesis about the relationship between the struggle for democracy and the struggle for socialism and elaborated the question of allies of the proletariat at various stages of the revolutionary movement.

Lenin paid tribute to the revolutionary potential of progressive students in Russia and considered them to be the most revolutionary and most responsive part of Russia's democratic-minded intelligentsia, though not at all homogeneous from the political point of view. Lenin held that the students were endowed with a sound revolutionary instinct. If they drew closer to the working class, and enjoyed its support, the students could develop into a potent

force in the revolutionary struggle. Therefore, it was the sacred duty of the revolutionary Social Democrats to explain to the working class what allies it had, including among students.

Lenin's article *Revolutionary Adventurism* in *Iskra* dealt a particularly telling blow at opportunism. It was a model of irreconcilable ideological struggle against petty-bourgeois "revolutionism", that constituted a danger to the cause of the working class. Lenin showed in the article that the revolutionary phrase-mongering of the SRs camouflaged total theoretical impotence, which would ultimately lead the party to complete political defeat. He maintained that the "noisy" sensational party of SRs was nothing but a wretched "handful of Russian intellectuals who have broken away from the old, but have not yet adhered to the new".¹⁹ While paying due tribute to individual heroes, Lenin nevertheless condemned terrorism as an artificial method of inciting the masses. "Single combat..." he wrote, "has the immediate effect of simply creating a short-lived sensation..." However, in the final count terroristic acts lead "to apathy and passive waiting for the next *bout*".²⁰

Lenin exposed illusions profusely spread by the SRs among the students about the historical need for self-sacrifice. He showed that this was a waste of revolutionary strength; nothing but purposeless self-sacrifice.

It was important to help liberate the youth from the influence of ultra-revolutionary phrase-mongering of the SRs.

In autumn, 1903, in response to a request from the editors of *Student*, a student paper, Lenin

¹⁹ V. Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 6, p. 196.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 191.

wrote an article *The Tasks of the Revolutionary Youth (First Letter)* which appeared in issues Nos. 2 and 3 of the newspaper. At the same time Lenin organized aid in the publication of *Student*.

In the *First Letter* Lenin dealt with the problem: What are students today and what is to be done to unite them ideologically? In directing his main blow at the SR thesis about the need for the ideological unification of students Lenin showed that there was no such thing as "student" in general. In his view, students as the most responsive part of the intelligentsia, included all the political groupings that existed in society. "The class division," he wrote, "is, of course, the ultimate basis of the political grouping; *in the final analysis*, of course, it always determines that grouping."²¹

He subdivided students into six political groups: reactionaries, indifferent students, academic zealots, liberals, Socialist Revolutionaries and Social Democrats. But early on in his *Plan of Letters on Tasks of the Revolutionary Youth* Lenin had underlined that class character of these six student groups is insufficiently distinct. He remarked that a definite class character would reveal itself only with the march of time and the growth of consciousness in the participants and creators of this process.

Contrary to the SRs, Lenin pointed out the progressive character of the class (and political) differentiation of students. He believed that far from hindering political utilization and the development and growth of student youth consciousness, the process of differentiation promoted these changes. Lenin proved that the deliberations of the SRs about "students" in general, about common stu-

²¹ V. Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 7, p. 46.

dent interests and the common student struggle and, consequently, about the harmfulness of division and splits resulting from affiliation to one political party or another, were nothing but sheer hypocrisy.

Lenin said that forward-thinking students were already beginning to choose between the two revolutionary parties. But the SR talk about "tagging labels" onto people and "forcing" conscience were pulling them backwards.

"What is this 'general political' movement?" he wrote. "The socialist movement plus the liberal movement... People who call themselves a *separate* party urge dissociation from party struggle!"²²

Attacking the main SR slogan about "ideological unification", Lenin explained that from a Marxist point of view this concept implied "propagating definite ideas, *clarifying* class differences, effecting ideological demarcation".²³ The desire of students to work out a "definite and integral socialist world outlook..." would result in "...the conscious and irrevocable choice of one of the two trends that have now taken shape among the revolutionaries",²⁴ i.e. in the choice between the two parties—the Social-Democratic Party or the Party of Socialist Revolutionaries. "...Only on the basis of a perfectly definite programme can and should one work among the widest student circles to broaden their academic outlook and to propagate scientific socialism, i.e., Marxism."²⁵

Lenin's article *The Tasks of the Revolutionary Youth* played an important role in the revolutionary education of young intellectuals and was widely

²² V. Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 7, p. 52.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 42.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 55.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 56.

circulated in Russia. According to police department information for 1904-1905 copies of the pamphlet were discovered during arrests and searches in various towns and cities of Russia.

The mounting revolutionary movement, the heroic struggle of the Russian proletariat, the theoretical and practical work of the Social-Democratic Party helped attract the more revolutionary elements from among the students. Many progressive students became devoted fighters for the cause of the working class.

On the eve of the Second Congress of the RSDLP after a careful scientific analysis of the revolutionary potentialities of students in terms of the class needs of the proletariat Lenin formulated a *Draft Resolution on the Attitude Towards the Student Youth* which was the Party's first document on the youth.

These materials are evidence of Lenin's interest in various aspects of this problem. These were, mainly, co-operation of the student movement with that of the proletariat, various attitudes in local party organizations towards this movement, and the struggle of political trends within the student movement itself. Lenin sought to single out the prevailing sentiments among the student masses and to analyze the reasons why their political sympathies changed. He was eager to find out how many social-democratic students there were, the degree to which non-proletarian youth participated in demonstrations, the details of student propaganda work and the extent to which young people were attracted by the tactics of terrorism resorted to by the SRs.

Lenin's draft summarized the experiences of the Social Democrats, especially that of *Iskra*, in working among the students. Lenin showed that acute

ideological struggle against opportunism in the non-proletarian youth movement was necessary and inevitable. He taught the youth to be irreconcilable in their attitude towards all sorts of deviations from Marxist theory and to fight against ideological opponents with determination.

Lenin posed the question of developing a revolutionary world outlook in the youth, of educating the youth in the spirit of Marxism. He advised young people seriously to study Marxism and to learn to find their bearings among various political and ideological trends.

He urged students to beware of false friends who sought to divert them from serious revolutionary work with empty revolutionary and ideological phrase-mongering. Lenin recommended that young intellectuals and their organizations "establish prior contact with the Social-Democratic organizations, so as to have the benefit of their advice and, as far as possible, to avoid serious mistakes at the very outset of their work".²⁶

Lenin's Draft Resolution showed profound understanding of the difficulties of winning over young intellectuals and gaining ideological influence over them. The document demanded that Party members assigned to work with students should not become confused if they happened to encounter an entangled spectrum of political views among non-proletarian youth. They should resolutely fight against theoretical opportunism in the youth movement, no matter how striking its "revolutionary" disguise might be.

Lenin believed that petty-bourgeois fellow-travelers would inevitably exercise an ideological influence on the youth movement in the future, be-

²⁶ V. Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 6, p. 469.

cause that part of the youth which had not assimilated the fundamentals of Marxism could be attracted by the glamour and noise of "leftist" phrasemongering. That was why he demanded that Party organizations unequivocally expose false revolutionism in the eyes of the youth. The Congress of the RSDLP passed a resolution *On Socialist Revolutionaries* that revealed in clear-cut terms their petty-bourgeois nature. It stated in part that the Party of Socialist Revolutionaries was merely a bourgeois-democratic faction and the fundamental attitude of the Social Democrats towards it could be no different from that towards any liberal representatives of the bourgeoisie in general. The resolution emphasized that SR activities are harmful not only for the political development of the proletariat, but also for the general democratic struggle against the autocracy. Special emphasis was laid on the fact that the Party of Socialist Revolutionaries was practically bankrupt.

The decisions of the Second Congress of the RSDLP set down a concrete programme of work for local Party committees among the democratic-minded students of Russia.

STUDENTS FIGHTING ON THE BARRICADES OF THE FIRST RUSSIAN REVOLUTION OF 1905-1907

In 1904 Russia was on the threshold of the first people's revolution in the epoch of imperialism. Analyzing the context in which the revolution matured Lenin wrote: "The approach of a great storm was sensed everywhere. All classes were in a state of ferment and preparation."²⁷

The inevitability of this storm faced the proletariat with the historic task of leading all the democratic sections of the population to fight tsarist autocracy at the same time encouraging their revolutionary initiative in every way.

The students of Russia were one of the allies of the proletariat, whose activities mounted as the revolution was drawing nearer.

At the same time the aggravation of the political crisis in Russia not only vigorously promoted the political awakening of the democratic mass of students, but also acted as a catalyst in the process of their ideological division.

Like a mirror the student movement reflected the attitude of various political parties towards the maturing revolution. The Bolsheviks commanded special prestige among the mass of revolution-

²⁷ V. Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 31, p. 26.

ary youth. The opportunist-minded Mensheviks concentrated on the bourgeois character of the revolution, regarding the liberal bourgeoisie as its main force. The Bolsheviks posed the question of the first bourgeois-democratic revolution in the epoch of imperialism in a totally new light. Lenin pointed out that, though it was impossible to go beyond the bourgeois-democratic framework of the revolution, the working class in alliance with the working peasants would play a decisive role in it. "...But we can vastly extend these boundaries," he wrote, "and within these boundaries we can and must fight for the interests of the proletariat, for its immediate needs and for conditions that will make it possible to prepare its forces for the future complete victory."²⁸

The SRs created confusion in the minds of the young people by failing to understand the fundamental difference between the democratic and socialist stages of a revolution and by hailing the first bourgeois revolution as a socialist one.

Hypocritically tempting the youth with democratic reforms in the system of education, the liberal bourgeoisie was doing its utmost to direct student discontent into the quiet channels of the reformist movement.

During this period Lenin worked intensively and his activities were distinguished by their multifaceted character. He persistently fought against the disruptive activities of the Mensheviks, exposed the anti-socialist essence of the SRs and paid great attention to the attitude of the working-class Party towards the liberal bourgeoisie.

On the eve of the revolution Lenin continued to analyze the revolutionary potential of the student

²⁸ V. Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 9, p. 52.

protest movement. He demanded that the Bolshevik Party should clearly state its position and work out revolutionary tactics with respect to the students in keeping with the concrete historical situation in which the revolution developed.

In 1904, the United Social-Democratic Organization of Students of St. Petersburg was formed. It was an illegal student organization which worked in close contact with the RSDLP. It was made up of 12 social democratic groups at higher education establishments. These groups in turn united student circles around them.

The active work of this organization rapidly increased the number of propagandists and organizers from among the students.

The first Russian bourgeois-democratic revolution broke out on January 9, 1905. On that day, which became known as "Bloody Sunday," the tsar ordered the troops to open fire at a peaceful demonstration.

Lenin wrote: "A turning-point in Russia's history has been reached."²⁹ The general strike of the working people in the capital, which started on January 7 and 8, was a prologue to "Bloody Sunday". It was of a manifestly political character and presaged an eruption. All the working people of St. Petersburg were on strike. The life in the capital with its population of one and a half million came to a standstill. The factory whistles stopped hooting. The city was plunged in darkness. It was left without a water supply or newspapers. The industrial and trade establishments ceased to function.

Tsarist autocracy decided to frighten the people and thus prevent the outbreak of the revolution.

²⁹ V. Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 8, p. 103.

This time tsarism chose Father Gapon as its tool. Acting on secret instructions from the Secret Political Police he organized a peaceful procession of the people to the Winter Palace to present a petition to the Tsar.

Bolsheviks tried to persuade the people to give up the idea of marching to the Winter Palace. There were some students among the Bolshevik agitators. N. V. Doroshenko, organizer of the Bolshevik group at St. Petersburg university, a member of the St. Petersburg RSDLP committee, and an active worker of the United Social Democratic Organization of Students of St. Petersburg, was one of them. He had acquired a wealth of experience in propaganda work among the workers by that time. Lenin first met Doroshenko during the revolution and spoke highly of him as one of the best correspondents of *Vperyod* (Forward), an illegal Bolshevik newspaper. Lenin called him a skilled Party worker. In later years Doroshenko recalled that on the eve of January 9 the workers sympathetically listened to his speeches. But it was already too late.

When it became obvious that it would be impossible to prevent the march, the students, responding to the call of the St. Petersburg Committee, decided to take part in it together with the workers. Early in the morning of January 9 several hundred young men and women joined the columns which, in addition to the workers, were made up of workers' wives, children and old men and women. Thousands upon thousands of people were marching, singing holy hymns, carrying icons and gonfalons. The marchers cherished a naive faith in the Tsar as they headed towards the city centre from the working-class outskirts.

Students marched with the workers. There were no independent student groups or purely student slogans.

Nicholas II, Emperor of Russia, made preparations for the encounter with his subjects like a real strategist.

The plan for the military operation had been worked out in advance. Forty thousand troops and gendarmes were brought to the central districts and outskirts of the city. By noon the first victims have shed their blood on the cobble stones of the capital. At 2 p.m. tsarist troops were firing volleys at women, old people and children, at the icons, gonfalons and portraits of the Tsar, finishing off the wounded on the threshold of the Winter Palace.

The tsarist troops also perpetrated an outrageous massacre near the university.

The heroic struggle of the workers and students keenly interested Lenin, who was in exile far away from Russia. He sensed the depth of the revolutionary changes that had occurred among the students. With every passing day of the revolution the student movement was becoming less isolated in its actions. The movement of radical students was becoming increasingly a component part of the whole revolutionary movement, headed by the proletariat and its Party. Working on the basis of scraps of information gleaned from telegraph reports, the papers and correspondence, Lenin formed a picture of the unequal battle fought on January 9 near the university. There the workers, the students from the university and the Mining Institute and women students of special women's courses started to build barricades by 1 p.m. He approved of the joint action by the workers and students, their attempt to switch over to active defence and to seize weapons at a munitions factory.

Why did Lenin attach such importance to the battles on the barricades on January 9? It was not only to pay tribute to the heroism of the masses of people. In Lenin's view what was particularly significant was that on the first day of the revolution the workers and students had already manifested determination and readiness to start an armed uprising.

The tsarist government preferred to hush up the exact number of victims. The government despicably hastened to remove the traces of their crime. They feared demonstrations in honour of the fallen. The people who were killed on "Bloody Sunday" were secretly buried during the night in common graves. By evening the political results of the day were clear. As Lenin put it, even "...the most uneducated, backward sections of the working class, who naively trusted the Tsar" learnt on that day "...a momentous lesson in civil war".³⁰ In his article *The Beginning of the Revolution in Russia* Lenin analyzed the events of January 9. He wrote that "Bloody Sunday" played a far greater role in the revolutionary education of the proletariat than "...months and years of drab, humdrum, wretched existence".³¹

At 7 p.m. on January 9 a meeting of the St. Petersburg Committee of the RSDLP was convened in student lodgings. Together with the students members of the committee wrote the first leaflet with a call to take an active part in the political struggle.

The police were unable to bury all the bodies of the victims killed on "Bloody Sunday" secretly.

³⁰ V. Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 8, p. 97.

³¹ *Ibid.*

The funeral of N. V. Savinkin, Social Democrat, second-year student of the St. Petersburg Polytechnical Institute, prompted a vivid mass demonstration organized by the students. Savinkin, carrying out an assignment of the Bolshevik Party committee on the eve of the massacre, had delivered several speeches to the workers. On January 9 he was killed near Palace Square. On January 10, the students of the Polytechnical Institute refused to attend classes and closed down the institute in protest against the murder. The funeral procession passed through the whole city. Thousands of students and workers walked behind the coffin. The funeral ceremony ended in a revolutionary rally at which the speakers made the call: "Down with autocracy!"

On the initiative of the RSDLP Central Committee the United Social-Democratic Organization of Students of St. Petersburg urged the students of the capital to join in the fight against autocracy, to declare a general strike and to stop attending classes.

On January 10, the students of the St. Petersburg Technological Institute held a stormy meeting at which the attitude of students towards current events was discussed. Addressing the rally Bolshevik students stigmatized the tsarist regime and called on students to take part in the general strike. In a resolution adopted by the meeting, students unanimously voiced solidarity with the fighting proletariat. The resolution said in part: "All studies shall be stopped forthwith. The meeting urges all comrades to unite in the fight for the political and economic demands put forward by the workers." After the meeting young people started to collect money to purchase arms for the workers and to create a fund to aid the strikers and the

wounded. Similar meetings were held at other higher education establishments in the city.

Lenin was well aware of the students' political sentiments. He was eager to know all the facts about the revolutionary disturbances in St. Petersburg and in other towns. Joint worker-student demonstrations were held in many cities of the Russian Empire. As he perused the foreign papers in the latter half of January, 1905, Lenin noted the action taken by students of the Riga Polytechnical Institute. During a demonstration in Riga the police had savagely beaten up the marchers. Two students were killed. Many were badly injured. Riga students voiced their protest by organizing a demonstration of mourning during the funeral. The police tried to disperse the procession, but the students beat off the attack (they were armed with knives and revolvers) and were successful. The mournful music of *Eternal Memory* at the graves of the victims was accompanied by cries of revolutionary protest.

The wave of student protests against tsarism's violence reached the faraway Siberia as well. On January 18, 1905, workers, students and secondary school pupils held a large antigovernment demonstration in Tomsk. It had been organized on the initiative of the local Bolshevik Party committee and revolutionary student group of Tomsk. A mighty column of marchers went through the city's main street carrying a red banner and singing the Marseillaise. The marchers, however, were halted by Cossacks.

On January 24, the students of Tomsk university stopped all classes and the university was closed down.

Lenin did not miss this news item on the tremendous joint worker-student demonstration in

Tomsk. Early in March, 1905, he prepared materials on the developments in Tomsk for *Vperyod* newspaper.

Late in January, 1905, the Kazan RSDLP committee, taking into account mounting student political activity, issued an appeal to the progressive-minded youth to join in the fight against the autocracy together with the working class.

Lenin showed particular interest in the young people of Kazan for he himself had once been a student at Kazan University.

Now, in 1905, Lenin clearly understood the deep evolution through which the student movement had gone. It had developed from a youth protest against autocracy to an organized struggle together with the working class.

Developments among the students presaged a stormy "revolutionary" year ahead. After the winter holidays classes were to be resumed on January 15. The government was obviously in a state of confusion. A powerful eruption of student protest was maturing in the capital where many educational establishments were located. The tsarist authorities decided to pursue a "wait and see" policy. They announced the temporary closing down of educational establishments until February 7. Bourgeois papers were persistently clamouring about rebellions, mutinies and disorders. The SRs gave them active support. Ignoring the revolutionary sentiments of the masses, the SRs stubbornly asserted that the masses were only the material of history, a background for self-sacrificing heroes, and called on the youth to engage in terrorism, and not to fight alongside the workers.

Soon after the revolution began the SRs performed a sensational terrorist act which attracted the attention of the whole country and evoked a strong

response in the hearts of young people. This was the assassination of Grand Duke Sergei Alexandrovich, Governor-General of Moscow who considered himself the absolute ruler of the city. He had ruthlessly suppressed all "sedition", relentlessly strangling even the most innocent attempts of free thought and banning practically all cultural and educational societies. He cherished bitter hatred for the students of Moscow. But it was not in his power to close down Moscow university.

On February 4, 1905, Ivan Kalyayev, a student and an SR, hurled a bomb at the Grand Duke's coach. When he was seized by the police, he cried out:

"Down with the damned tsar, long live freedom, down with the damned government, long live the Party of Socialist Revolutionaries."

A section of the students of Moscow applauded Kalyayev for his action on February 4, 1905. He won a few admirers. Some of them knew him personally, having met him in the laboratories at Moscow university, where he studied. Many remembered him as an active participant in the student actions in St. Petersburg in 1899. Kalyayev's charming personality, which combined the qualities of a student, poet, revolutionary and avenger-martyr, could have led to the development of the terrorist sentiments of the democratic youth movement. The fiery speech Ivan Kalyayev made at the trial elicited repercussions throughout Russia and rang a bell in thousands of young hearts. The SRs proclaimed the fusion of terrorism with the mass revolutionary movement as a peculiar slogan of their revolutionary tactics. According to the gendarmerie, local combat teams made over 30 attempts at assassination in the course of 1905. Having come to the conclusion that the time was ripe for the "introduction of so-

cialism" in the countryside, the SRs urged the peasants to seize the land. They proposed that the students should abandon the towns and cities and help organize the equal distribution of land.

The socialist phrase-mongering of the SRs, combined with their romantic spirit of heroic deeds, not only revived a kind of a non-party ideal among some students, but aroused a desire among the Social Democrats to establish "fighting unity" with the SRs.

Taking these sentiments into account Lenin wrote an article entitled *A Militant Agreement for the Uprising* immediately after Kalyayev's assassination of the Grand Duke. He characterized the assassination as an instance of "terrorism of the old type".³² In this article he taught the youth to distinguish between the momentary "fascination" created by unnecessary individual self-sacrifice and the heroism of the masses led by a proletarian Party. "In the interests of the revolution," Lenin wrote, "our ideal should by no means be that all parties, all trends and shades of opinion fuse in a revolutionary chaos".³³

In exposing the petty-bourgeois nature of the SRs, Lenin insisted that there should be no place for a compromise in the sphere of ideology. Lenin saw in the independent tactics of the Bolshevik Party in the revolution a guarantee of socialism's victory and the road to victory that was the most free from vacillations.³⁴

Lenin called on his comrades-in-arms in the Party to surmount all difficulties in working with the youth. He wrote that it was essential, in the context of the revolution, to revise radically the forms and

³² V. Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 8, p. 162.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 165.

³⁴ See V. Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 8, p. 159.

methods of work to revolutionize the masses, including the progressive students.

Displaying a principled and exacting Party stand, Lenin strongly urged that the youth, including a part of the non-proletarian progressive-minded students, be drawn into the revolution. He demanded that the Bolsheviks should "get rid of all the old habits of immobility", of their fear of the youth, and "with desperate speed, unite all people with revolutionary initiative and set them to work."³⁵ Otherwise, Lenin warned, these people, especially the inexperienced youth, might be carried away by pseudo-revolutionism. Lenin's class approach in the period of the tremendous upsurge of energy in the young, clearly revealed the revolutionary possibilities of various youth detachments and the prospects of winning them over to the side of the proletariat. "...All we have to do," Lenin wrote, "is to recruit young people more widely and boldly, more boldly and widely, and again more widely and again more boldly, *without fearing them*. This is a time of war. The youth—the students, and still more so the young workers—will decide the issue of the whole struggle."³⁶

In March, 1905, Lenin wrote an article entitled *New Tasks and New Forces* in which he again discussed the need to enlist and use "fresh" forces in Party work, including the students. In formulating this task he immediately gave a practical solution to the question of "how to utilize, direct, unite, and organize these new forces", taking into account the peculiar character of the revolutionary epoch, because "a revolutionary epoch is to the Social-Democrats what war-time is to an army". Further Lenin

³⁵ V. Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 8, p. 146.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

pointed out that "in war we necessarily and inevitably have to put up with less trained replacements"³⁷ to reinforce the revolutionary ranks. It was, therefore, essential to train them and to acquaint them with new methods. In Lenin's view, the course of revolutionary events would provide good practical experience and give "object lessons". Lenin appealed to his comrades in the Party: "So tackle the new methods of training more boldly, comrades! Forward, and organize more and more squads, send them into battle, recruit more young workers, extend the normal framework of all Party organizations, from committees to factory groups, craft unions, and student circles!"³⁸

January 9 and subsequent events took place during the winter holidays, when many students were away in the provinces. The news of the tragic developments and of the students who fell victim to the reprisals brought the young people back to their institutes. Studies were to be resumed shortly and the students were getting prepared for this day. Student meetings were to be held at which students were to work out their final political platform and determine their forms of protest.

February 7 was a significant day for all students in Russia. A student political meeting was to be held in the Assembly Hall of St. Petersburg university. The programme of the meeting and draft resolution had been prepared by the social-democratic group at the university on February 4, 1905. The speakers had also been appointed.

In the morning of February 7 there was unusual excitement on the Neva Embankment near the

³⁷ V. Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 8, pp. 213, 217.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 218.

university. Hundreds of students were gathering at the old building. Journalists from foreign newspapers were also hurrying to attend the political meeting, which was unusual for Russia, whose people were deprived of freedom of speech. When a journalist asked: "What will happen in Russia next?", students confidently replied: "A revolution!"

By noon the Assembly Hall at the university was full. Five thousand people had squeezed into it. The young people were eager to express publicly their readiness to engage in a decisive clash with the autocracy.

The professors who addressed the audience pleaded with the young people to see reason in the name of their love for the university and to place studies above politics. "Down with the strike," they cried. "May the sacred wisdom of learning triumph!" In contrast, young speakers urged the audience to overthrow "the system of violence and bureaucracy". The students maintained that their place was in the ranks of the great revolutionary army, in the ranks of those who were fighting for the emancipation of the proletariat and the peasant masses. They upheld the workers' demand for the convocation of a Constituent Assembly. They unanimously demanded freedom of speech, of assembly, of strikes, and of association; an amnesty for all political prisoners; and the right for each nation to self-determination.

By 5 p. m. all the items on the agenda had been discussed. The students unanimously voted for calling a strike. The resolution drafted by the social-democratic group received stormy applause. It read in part: "By closing down the university we shall enable our comrades to devote their entire energy to the inevitable forthcoming revolution."

At the end of the meeting the young people tore up the picture of Tsar Nicolas II to cries of approval. The meeting ended with an ovation and the singing of revolutionary songs. The meeting clearly showed that the path of Russia's progressive students and that of the liberal bourgeoisie had parted once and for all.

Frightened by the frankly revolutionary stand taken by the students the university council adopted a decision not to resume studies until "mental equilibrium" had been restored.

The students' stand aroused the rage of Nicolas II. He issued a decision "to expel" all the students from the university. As far as the university administration was concerned, he expressed his royal "displeasure" in the form of a series of strict reprimands.

Under the impact of the January strike started by the St. Petersburg proletariat the students of all educational establishments in Russia, except for military and theological schools, stopped their studies following the example set by the St. Petersburg students. The beginning of the revolution vividly demonstrated the success of the Bolshevik Party's work among the progressive students in the years preceding revolutionary action.

The 3rd Congress of the RSDLP convened by the Bolsheviks in London in April, 1905, determined the Party's strategy and tactics in a bourgeois-democratic revolution. It set the working class the task of organizing and leading the future revolution. The working class was to rally around itself all the democratic forces. Lenin wrote that the proletarian party should base its actions on the revolutionary creative activity of the masses and boldly propagandize its tasks. Its slogans should be a beacon that would reveal the Party's

"democratic and socialist ideal in all its magnitude and splendour".³⁹

Frightened by the strength of the students, who resolutely sided with the proletariat in its clash with the autocracy, the government published *The Provisional Rules for the Administration of Higher Education Establishments*, on August 27. As Lenin put it, the Tsar actually made a miserable concession, a paltry reform, to the intelligentsia and the student youth granted with the object of blunting the edge of the political antagonism in the country.⁴⁰

The Provisional Rules had been elaborated at a conference of the Ministry for Public Education in June, 1905. As a draft they were submitted to the Tsar on August 18. He graciously gave his approval, and on August 26 they were nearly unanimously supported by the cabinet of ministers. According to the royal decree, extremely limited autonomy was granted to the higher education establishments, although the text of the Rules did not contain the "seditious" word "autonomy". The university council and departments were given the right to elect the rector and deans. However, the rector's election was subject to the approval of the Minister for Public Education. The "independence" of university councils consisted of their right to ask the minister to close down the university in the event of student disturbances. The students received the right to meetings, though with the permission of the Council of Professors.

The Provisional Rules contained no guarantees that these promises would be fulfilled. They were designed to appease the liberal professors for tsar-

³⁹ V. Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 9, p. 113.

⁴⁰ See V. Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 9, p. 377.

ism hoped to establish order in university life in alliance with these professors.

Overwhelmed by gratitude for the "freedoms" granted them, the lackeys of autocracy prepared immediately to take advantage of their rights to re-install "order" within the walls of the higher education establishments.

As distinguished from the liberal professors the progressive students regarded the Provisional Rules as a logical continuation of the measures being undertaken by tsarism to split up the liberal intelligentsia and to come to terms with the bourgeoisie because without this "it was impossible to govern the country, to obtain money, or to continue existing. . ." ⁴¹

However, even this extremely limited autonomy had a definite effect on student movement in the conditions of the rising revolution, because it intensified the class struggle in the universities.

Under the impact of the general strike of the proletariat the students chose, as early as January-February, the general student strike as their main form of protest. Thus, the tsarist government failed to make it up with the students. On the contrary, the limited autonomy produced a minute breach in the autocratic-serf system. As a result, new revolutionary energy found release. It was now possible to utilize this autonomy in the interests of the revolution. It was, therefore, necessary to change the tactics of struggle within the revolutionary youth movement. In this connection the Central Committee of the RSDLP, in an appeal to the students, recommended that, in view of the new historical situation, the students end the strike and re-open

⁴¹ V. Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 9, p. 399.

higher education establishments in the interests of the revolution.

In August, 1905, the representatives of the RSDLP Central Committee, living in Russia, held a meeting which also recommended that the students resume their studies in order to turn the lecture halls and classrooms of the higher education establishments into a forum for the revolution.

The United Social-Democratic Students Organization of St. Petersburg called on students to re-open the higher education establishments and to hold rallies. It issued a leaflet *To All Revolutionary Students* which said that the re-opened educational establishments would constitute a greater danger to tsarism, than those on strike.

In autumn, 1905, when the revolutionary movement embraced the entire country, the students marked the beginning of the academic year with revolutionary meetings and rallies. Impassioned anti-government speeches were made within the walls of higher education establishments. Such a start to the new academic year intensified ferment among the students. Student meetings were acquiring an increasingly revolutionary character and were being attended by more and more people. As a rule, they were held in keeping with a pre-arranged plan, with Bolshevik speakers addressing the audience. These meetings were held under Party slogans, and many workers attended as well.

Lenin made special mention of two meetings held at Moscow and St. Petersburg universities, because they demonstrated most vividly the success of the Party slogans about boycotting the Duma, about the armed uprising and the provisional revolutionary government.

The meeting at Moscow university, which was attended by more than 4,000 workers, students and

intellectuals went on practically without break from September 7 to 9. The point at issue was a dispute about the tasks of the revolution and the place and tactics of progressive students in the prevailing political situation.

How did the students of Russia intend to make their contribution to the revolution? Many bourgeois papers, including foreign dailies, also raised this question. In his article *Lessons of the Moscow Events* Lenin quoted an excerpt from a German paper which voiced the fear that Russian liberals felt facing the young rebels. It read: "...The students have adopted the watchword of the Social-Democratic leaders... The Moscow students have already shown how this is being put into effect: they invited to the University premises such large numbers of workers and other persons who have no connection with the University that the students themselves were in a minority."⁴²

More than 2,000 people attended an all-student meeting in the Assembly Hall of St. Petersburg university on September 13. They adopted a resolution which testified to the popularity of Bolshevik slogans among them. The young people decided to end the student strike, to re-open the university in pursuit of revolutionary aims and to support the Bolshevik tactics of boycotting the Duma. The newspaper *Proletari* (Proletarian) reported that 1,702 people voted for the resolution, 243—against and 77 abstained. Rallies and meetings continued to be held at universities. In the period from September 15 to October 15 fifteen meetings were conducted at St. Petersburg university alone.

Thus, a new form of struggle against autocracy was devised, i. e. the use of higher education estab-

⁴² V. Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 9, pp. 380, 381.

lishments for revolutionary propaganda work. The students of Kiev, Odessa, Kharkov, Kazan, Riga and Yuryev (Tartu) adopted decisions to re-open their educational establishments. "Workers flocked to the students' gatherings," Lenin wrote, "which began to develop into popular revolutionary meetings, where the proletariat, the foremost class in the struggle for liberty, predominated."⁴³

In many of his articles, such as *The Political Strike and the Street Fighting in Moscow*, *Days of Bloodshed in Moscow*, and *The Lessons of the Moscow Events*, Lenin showed a high esteem for the students' political activity and their contribution to the revolutionary cause. He took note of the fact that, having made available their halls for the revolutionary masses, the students put freedom of assembly into practice. In tsarist Russia institutes of higher learning were islands where people's rallies could be held without obstruction and where the speakers, in fact, enjoyed immunity. The proletariat took advantage of this freedom of assembly granted by the students. The Bolsheviks turned the higher education establishments into propaganda centres for rallying the masses.

Excited by the revolutionary events, thousands of people gathered in lecture halls of higher education establishments for mass rallies. As the workers prevailed in numbers, they set the tune. They regarded these rallies as acts that corresponded to the requirements of the moment and had already benefited the interests of the proletariat. They regarded the revolutionary students as their allies. The success of joint action by forward-thinking students and proletarians under the guidance of the Bolshevik Party and the tremendous scope and political im-

⁴³ V. Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 9, p. 377.

portance of the rallies in the citadels of learning helped raise the ideological level of the best part of the students. Social-democratic groups at higher education establishments grew rapidly. In November, 1905, the social-democratic group of St. Petersburg university had 104 Party members. In a leaflet entitled *To All Revolutionary Students* the Bolsheviks called on the youth to fight together with the working class under such slogans as: Hail the armed uprising! Form a provisional revolutionary government! Form a revolutionary army!

In the course of the First Russian Revolution Lenin drew the attention of the Bolsheviks to a specific law governing the struggle of the students in the conditions of the maturing class crisis. It was precisely during this period that students could play the role of initiator and catalyst of political action. Of course, the revolutionary initiative of the students would be an important factor, if their political activities were conducted fully in keeping with the objective laws of history and not in contradiction to these laws. It should be borne in mind that the students acted consistently when they were under the influence of, and maintained close contact with, the proletariat.

Meanwhile, ties connecting progressive students with the working class were growing stronger. The conflagration in Russia was extending. In September, 1905, a printers' strike started in Moscow. The bakers, and tobacco, furniture and tram workers struck too. The strike was rapidly turning into a political strike. The police resorted to arms in suppressing the workers, which resulted in bloodshed. The workers began to build barricades. Late in September and early in October strikes of solidarity with the proletariat of Moscow broke out in practically all the towns of Russia. The country was on the

threshold of a general all-Russia strike. Its slogans were: Down with the tsarist government! Hail the armed uprising! Hail the democratic republic!

Tsarism tried to strangle the strike by force of arms. Trepov, Governor General of the capital, issued an order that resounded throughout the country: "Do not fire blank cartridges! Do not spare your ammunition!"

The heroic struggle of the workers against tsarist power intensified the political activity of the student masses. Lenin pointed out that the student youth dissociated itself from the liberal bourgeoisie and developed into a "forward-thinking section" of all the democratic forces.

In a detailed analysis of student action during this period Lenin concluded that "the students are organizing into a combatant force of the revolution."⁴⁴ Lenin believed that the mobilization of revolutionary forces, such as the progressive students, was particularly important during the upsurge of class battles. In October, 1905, he wrote: "The barometer indicates a storm... everything has been dislodged by the mighty whirlwind of a concerted proletarian onslaught. The revolution is progressing at astonishing speed."⁴⁵

In the decisive clash with tsarist autocracy Lenin pinned his hopes on the revolutionary zeal of the workers and students. Addressing the Combat Committee of the St. Petersburg RSDLP Committee on October 16 he wrote: "Go to the youth... Form fighting squads *at once* everywhere, among the students, and *especially among the workers*, etc., etc."⁴⁶

⁴⁴ V. Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 9, p. 408.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 392.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 344, 345.

The call from the leader was heeded. The Social Democrats mobilized the students to fight in the class interests of the proletariat. The rally of railwaymen and students held at St. Petersburg university on October 11 and attended by several thousand people was a case in point. It was held after a delegation of workers presented an ultimatum to the tsarist government demanding universal and direct suffrage, which was rejected. The proletariat took advantage of the rostrum made available by the revolutionary students. The Bolsheviks who addressed the rally within the walls of the university called on the workers to declare a general strike and to fight for a democratic republic. The rally ended with the cry: "Down with autocracy!" This call from the rostrum of the university was picked up that same day by the workers of St. Petersburg's biggest factories and plants. On October 14 the strike declared in St. Petersburg became a general strike.

Frightened by the revolutionary activities of the students who made their lecture halls available to the people for rallies, the tsarist government urgently published a decision banning all political meetings on the premises of higher education establishments. The Tsar frankly admitted that he was particularly annoyed by the rallies at the university. All educational establishments were officially declared closed. Troops were stationed on the premises. Foot and mounted patrols were maintained around the clock. Enjoying the support of the workers the revolutionary students offered heroic resistance to the troops.

In October the workers and students jointly built barricades in Kharkov, Novorossiisk and Odessa. Bloody battles were fought between the

troops and the defenders of the barricades in many places.

On October 15, Moscow university students built barricades. The defenders of the university were a formidable force, and some tsarist authorities even started negotiations with them. The barricades on the university grounds and regular joint worker-student action in various districts of the city indicated that the strike in Moscow was heading for an armed uprising.

The October strike of 1905 paralyzed forces of tsarist autocracy. The opposing forces in the country were balanced. The Tsar's Manifesto of October 17, which declared the basic principles of bourgeois democracy, reflected this balance. Nicholas II, Tsar of Russia, "granted" the people civil rights, such as personal immunity, freedom of conscience, assembly and association.

Lenin proclaimed this Manifesto the first victory of the revolution. However, he pointed out that this victory did not decide the outcome of the struggle as the Tsar was still in power. The Tsar had not capitulated, he had only given false promises, Lenin warned. The Tsar's true aim was to win time with the help of the Manifesto in order to concentrate enough forces to deal a crushing blow at the fighting people.

The Russian bourgeoisie enthusiastically hailed the Manifesto. There was unusual excitement in the streets of towns and cities. Improvised rallies were held in the squares. Speakers sang praises to the new state system. People in restaurants cried: "Hurrah!" and drank toasts to the "great act of history". Church services were held on the occasion of the granting of a constitution. Some workers, intellectuals and students were showing signs of cherishing constitutional illusions.

However, the fighting vanguard of the Russian proletariat—the Bolshevik Party led by Lenin—exposed the falseness and hypocrisy of the Tsar's Manifesto from the outset. The people were not satisfied with the Tsar's paper promises.

On October 18, the day the Tsar's Manifesto was published, tens of thousands of workers and students came out into the streets of St. Petersburg carrying red banners. After a rally in a square the demonstrators marched along the beaten track to the university. But the doors were closed and guarded by the police. The very first day the political rights were proclaimed tsarism exposed its hypocritical stand. "Freedom of assembly has been declared," Lenin wrote, "yet the universities, which were the first to create actual freedom of assembly in Russia, have been closed, and their entrances are under police and military guard."⁴⁷

A meeting was held in front of the university building. Addressing the people the speakers exposed the Tsar, demanded amnesty for political prisoners and the introduction of real democratic freedoms. The students installed a red flag on the roof of the university building. On that day red flags were hoisted on many of the capital's educational establishments. Towards the evening the tsarist government, flouting the newly-granted freedom of assembly, ordered the police and troops to open fire at the workers and students.

Lenin, far away from home in exile, carefully followed the developments in St. Petersburg on October 18. This can be seen by his detailed notes from the British conservative newspaper *The Times* which carried a report on a mass anti-government student demonstration held in St. Petersburg.

⁴⁷ V. Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 9, p. 462.

Lenin reprinted practically the whole of it in *Proletari*. Taking note of its political topicality and pointing to the need to print it without delay Lenin made a marginal note: "Urgent!"

No sooner had the Tsar enacted the Manifesto of October 17, than autoocracy began to violate the constitution.

It was then that the tsarist government brought in the so-called Black Hundreds, made up of various social outcasts living on handouts. These organizations were financially backed by pro-monarchist landlords. The Tsar himself handed out sops to them. With the tacit consent of the police the Black Hundreds started to beat up and even massacre demonstrators, making short work of class conscious workers, revolutionaries and students.

"The Black Hundreds," wrote Lenin, "have got down to work in a way Russia has never seen before."⁴⁸

One of the first acts of the Black Hundreds was the savage assassination of Nikolai Bauman, an ardent professional revolutionary and a man of gift and talent, well-known to Moscow students.

On October 19, the day after the murder of Bauman, a meeting of workers and students at Moscow university passed a special appeal. The document exposed the Tsar's perfidious tactics: having signed the Manifesto on freedom with one hand, he directed the activities of the Black Hundreds with the other to suppress the struggle of the fighters for real freedom. The appeal ended with the call: "Prepare for the armed uprising, comrades! Do not let the Black Hundreds kill fighters in your ranks and get away with it."

⁴⁸ V. Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 9, p. 450.

On October 20 Bauman's funeral took place. The red coffin was placed in the Assembly Hall of the Higher Technical School.

The funeral procession was a review of the fighting forces of the proletariat, showing the ardent desire of progressive students to fight together with the working class. A mighty column of 200,000 workers and students formed up in front of the Higher Technical School under red velvet banners. Students with numerous wreaths of flowers followed behind the coffin. A joint worker-student squad was formed to protect the procession. It took nine hours for the column of mourners to march through the whole city. When the mourners were returning from the cemetery in the evening the Black Hundreds and troops opened fire. At the university building there was a bloody clash in which six were killed and 60 wounded, half of whom were students.

Lenin was notified of Bauman's murder by telegram on the day following the funeral.

In an obituary Lenin noted the political significance of the tragic event. He pointed out that the assassination of Nikolai Bauman, just like the shooting of workers and students after the funeral, revealed that the Manifesto of October 17 was a "trap" and the behaviour of the government after the Manifesto was sheer provocation.

"What are all these promised liberties worth," he wrote, "so long as power and armed force remain in the hands of the government?... May the honours paid to his remains by the people who have risen in revolt be a pledge of the complete victory of the uprising and the complete destruction of accursed tsarism!"⁴⁹

⁴⁹ V. Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 9, p. 437.

After Bauman's funeral there were definite signs of an approaching, inevitable and open clash with tsarism.

The week following the announcement of the Manifesto saw an orgy of blood in which the Black Hundreds revelled. Students were their primary target. The government specially incited the Black Hundreds to beat up the students.

It was vital to respond to Black Hundred terrorism in an organized fashion. On the initiative of the Bolsheviks, workers' fighting squads were organized everywhere. Lenin's instructions on recruiting the youth for service in fighting squads were being translated into practice. The revolution needed young men with energy, willing to sacrifice themselves, and with a strong hatred for autocracy. On Lenin's recommendation a combat group had started working in St. Petersburg from January, 1905, to make preparations for an armed uprising. It had broad ties with students who displayed initiative and resourcefulness in the manufacturing of weapons. The Party also used all possible means to get arms from abroad. The students of St. Petersburg, Riga, Revel,⁵⁰ Helsingfors⁵¹ and Odessa played an especially big part in this risky undertaking. Their vigorous activity caused the tsarist government to introduce special police inspection in the Black and Baltic Sea ports.

By October, 1905, there were quite a number of student squads. The biggest was the university detachment. A student described the revolutionary situation at Moscow university in October, 1905, in the following way:

⁵⁰ Revel—Tallinn today.

⁵¹ Helsingfors—Helsinki today.

"We are now organizing combat squads... Several combat groups of ten are on duty every evening at the university. On call they are prepared to hasten to anybody's aid. The university has become a revolutionary centre, a military barracks and even a hospital which gives first aid. In its November report the Moscow Police Department stated that in the past combat squads functioned secretly but that now they were becoming rather bold."

The student squads performed a wide range of functions which varied depending on the course of revolutionary events. At the beginning they were charged with the protection of rallies, meetings and demonstrations. Then, as class battles mounted, military functions came to the foreground. It was necessary to repel the Black Hundreds, to take part in combat operations, to deliver and store arms and to fight on the barricades. The aid granted by medical students was particularly appreciated. They put up first aid stations in various parts of the city and organized mobile medical units which went to areas where armed clashes seemed likely. During the armed uprising there were 25 such units in Moscow.

The struggle of the students increased in intensity as the class battles mounted. "The heroic proletariat of Moscow," Lenin wrote, "has shown that an active struggle is possible, and has drawn into this struggle a large body of people from strata of the urban population hitherto considered politically indifferent, if not reactionary."⁵²

Progressive-minded university professors aided the students in the use of weapons. Under the guise of scientific papers they put out special instructions on weapon manufacture. They trained

⁵² V. Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 10, p. 94.

students in organizing street fighting on the barricades.

In training the youth in street fighting tactics Lenin strongly advised to apply creatively the West European experience to the specific conditions of the Russian revolution. That Lenin attached special importance to street fighting tactics can be seen from the publication in the issue No. 11 of the *Vperyod* newspaper of an article by Gustave-Paul Cluseret, a Paris Commune leader. It appeared in a translation Lenin edited under the title *On Street Fighting (Advice of a General of the Commune)*.

An example of street fighting was the staunch defence of the Fiedler School by workers' and students' squads. Early in December, 1905, it became a centre of all Moscow's combat organizations. The troops managed to take the building on December 9 only after several artillery attacks. They took cruel revenge on the rebels. They loaded heavily wounded men onto carts, together with dead bodies. The wounded men pleaded with the troops to allow them to join the column of their arrested comrades so that they could die among them.

When the Fiedler School fell and the troops had wallowed in the orgy of blood, a call to the barricades was sounded in Moscow. The student squad added a glorious page to the heroic chronicle of action on the barricades. They acted quickly, in small groups, applying the tactics of guerrilla street fighting which Lenin was so insistent in recommending.

One of the most heroic episodes of the armed uprising in Moscow was the struggle of the workers in Presnya, one of the districts of the city. The defenders of Presnya retained high morale to the very end. While the district was in the workers' hands,

it was administered by a local workers' government. All wine shops and pubs were closed. Public catering was organized for the workers. For nine whole days the combat squads beat off the attacks of the tsarist troops. A student squad fought bravely together with the workers' squads.

As the armed uprising drew to a close the remnants of student detachments, who refused to lay down their arms, made their way to Presnya from other districts. The last bloody battle was fought on December 17. The losses were high. The number of students killed in action in Presnya and the number shot by a firing squad have never been established. Only the names of certain heroes and the tragic outcome of several battles are known. A report in the *Novosti Dnya* (News of the Day) newspaper read: "The bodies of four boys riddled with bullets were lying near Gorbaty Bridge. The young men were wearing jackets and hats of a combat squad. Under the unbuttoned jackets you could see student uniform jackets. A young man clad in a student's uniform made the assailants pay a very high price for his life. When he was surrounded by the troops he shot many of them with his pistol and then fought with his fists. His head was sliced with a sabre and his chest was pierced with bullets."

Lenin thought highly of the role played by the social-democratic students in the December armed uprising. In an article entitled *The Workers' Party and Its Tasks in the Present Situation* Lenin wrote: "The general tasks of the students in the Russian liberation movement have been explained more than once in the Social-Democratic press... There is no need to explain to student Social-Democrats the leading role of the working-class movement, the immense importance of the peasant movement, or the importance of assistance to both by those intel-

lectuals who have pondered the Marxist world-outlook, have taken the side of the proletariat, and are prepared to train themselves to become real members of the workers' party."⁵³

The revolution needed Lenin back home. Early in November he left Geneva for home via Stockholm.

On November 8, he was already in St. Petersburg in the midst of the crucial political developments. He addressed Party meetings, guided the work of the Central and St. Petersburg Party committees, and met workers and students. On his arrival the Central Committee began to work much more actively.

In the latter half of November, 1905, Lenin headed a course for future Party propaganda workers. Classes were organized on the premises of the women's courses. The place was chosen because it was close to the city's factory outskirts and it was possible quickly to call a meeting of workers. Security was assured by student squads. During his lectures Lenin displayed an interest in everything: in the financial circumstances of the girl-students who attended the courses and in the part they played in the revolutionary movement. He also wanted to know how well they were supplied with Bolshevik publications.

Later one of the girl-students wrote in her memoirs of the powerful charm of Lenin's personality. His ideas gave great inspiration to the young people. "As we listened to Lenin," she wrote, "we, young girl-students, thought that we would be prepared to give up everything to follow this man, because he spoke only the truth and that was what everyone needed."

⁵³ V. Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 10, p. 93.

Lenin always found time to speak to students personally, to help them find their bearings in the difficult political situation. The young people, for their part, did all they could to help him, inviting him to their hostels for the night to avoid the police and guarding him, when he made speeches.

Early in December, 1905, Lenin inspected an underground workshop engaged in the manufacture of bombs, which was located on the premises of the Polytechnical Institute.

Lenin's work late in 1905, when the revolution reached its climax, was multifaceted and intensive. Despite this he found time to talk to a few groups of students of the Electrical Engineering Institute. In these talks he dealt with Marxist philosophy and current events. He also visited the students' hostel.

The First Russian Revolution continued for two and a half years. By the middle of 1907 the tsarist government managed to take over the initiative. The revolution was cruelly suppressed. Nicholas II and his government carried out unprecedented reprisals against the workers, peasants and progressive intellectuals. Imposition of the death sentence became state policy. In the period from 1907 to 1910 five thousand people were executed without investigation or trial. During these years 26,000 were convicted on political charges. In 1908 alone the number of death sentences passed in Russia was 21 times more than in all the European countries taken together.

The onslaught of the reactionaries caused a decline in the membership of the Social-Democratic Party. During this difficult period many former fellow-travellers of the revolution, who were "worn out", raised a hue and cry about the alleged collapse of the proletarian party. They insisted that in fact only young people remained in it. With great rev-

olutionary optimism Lenin quoted Friedrich Engels' words in reply:

"... Is it not natural that youth should predominate in our Party, the revolutionary Party? We are the Party of the future, and the future belongs to the youth."⁵⁴

In pursuit of their policy of bloody terror the government launched attacks mainly on the working class. But the Tsar had a special account to settle with progressive students who had sided with the people in the First Russian Revolution. After the defeat of the revolution he could afford to abandon his sham manoeuvres with respect to the higher schools. He could now relentlessly crush "sedition" among the students and persecute the revolutionary-minded youth.

Young workers, side by side with their older comrades, staunchly stood up to the attacks by the reactionaries.

Lenin pointed out that the counter-revolutionaries could not deprive the working youth of its strength, courage and faith in the cause. As far as the student youth was concerned, which was mainly of petty-bourgeois origin, they took the failure of the revolution especially close to heart. They suffered from the lack of theoretical maturity, the weakening of contacts with the proletarian Party and the ideological onslaught of reactionary professors.

The tsarist government began its attack on the students by abolishing higher school autonomy, which had been used for revolutionary purposes.

In April 1906 N. M. Kaufman was appointed Minister for Education. In his opinion Russia was not yet ready for all the freedoms that had been

⁵⁴ V. Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 11, p. 354.

promised, and the mass of the population did not need them.

Women were no longer admitted to the university. Loyalty certificates were now obligatory for students. All bodies of student representatives were prohibited. Police surveillance of students was restored. The only remnant of student autonomy was their right to elect the rector and pro-rector. Moreover, the ministry strictly regulated the filling of posts, and the right of final approval was vested with the Minister for Public Education. Official professors displayed their submission to the monarch and his policy. The professors "lament and snivel... imploring the students not to resort to unlawful courses which can only play into the hands of reaction..."⁵⁵ Lenin wrote.

Extreme political reaction set in, affecting all spheres of social life. In his work "*Left-Wing Communism, an Infantile Disorder*" Lenin characterized these years in the following words: "Depression, demoralization, splits, discord, defection, and pornography took the place of politics. There was an ever greater drift towards philosophical idealism; mysticism became the garb of counter-revolutionary sentiments."⁵⁶ The forces of counter-revolution launched an offensive against the student youth from all sides, particularly in the area of economics, politics and ideology.

Russian bourgeois philosophers and writers began to exert ideological pressure on students, doing their utmost to ostracize them and to discredit them in the eyes of society. Bourgeois writers began to cast aspersions on Russian students, depicting them in grim colours. Sad though it may be, they wrote, the

⁵⁵ V. Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 15, p. 213.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, Vol. 31, p. 27.

revolutionary ferment which had broken out among the students in 1905 was the direct result of the degeneration of society.

These writers presented the students as a mob of adolescents who, carried away by their sexual impulses, found satisfaction in revolutionary rebellion. The bourgeois press constantly maintained that most young people entering universities were already corrupt in body and soul. They were hostile to the family and society, despised science, and were depraved by their idleness. So they had to channel their excess energy into rebellion. With such young people there could be no question of progress, the radical restructuring of society or other higher matters. The Russian bourgeoisie deliberately pretended that it was troubled by the possibility of young people being led astray. The bourgeoisie also wanted to frighten the Russian philistine with the sinister figure of the long-haired student.

It was the sacred duty of the "fathers" to show these young people who had gone astray the way out of the ethical and political impasse, which they believed the revolution had led them into. These "pillars" of ideology assiduously tried to persuade the students to fight for spiritual autonomy, the self-isolation of the individual, singing praises to bourgeois individualism. Having accused the students of revolutionary hooliganism and of a depersonalized herd instinct, these "pillars" of ideology preached the necessity of overcoming group narrow-mindedness and acquiring spiritual autonomy.

In order to influence young people who supported the Social Democrats, bourgeois writers slandered the Bolshevik Party. They claimed that their rules negated inner freedom and subordinated the individual to group instincts. The liberal monarchists

said that the Russian intellectual was traditionally against discipline and organization.

During the period of reaction Lenin's article *Party Organization and Party Literature* was subjected to particularly fierce attacks.

These efforts to promote bourgeois intellectual individualism were strongly rebuffed by Lenin: "There can be no real and effective 'freedom' in a society based on the power of money, in a society in which the masses of working people live in poverty and a handful of rich live like parasites."⁵⁷

Bourgeois writers called Lenin a "latter-day inquisitor". They maintained that his ideas stemmed from a hatred of individual creative activity. But they were forced to admit that, even when the wave of reaction reached its peak, Lenin's dreams and his calls: "Down with non-Party writers!" and "Down with superman writers!" won above all support in the universities.

Hailing individualism, they deliberately fostered opportunistic tendencies among the intellectuals thus increasing their spiritual flabbiness and hesitancy in struggle. The call to subjective "self-isolation" of the personality was to sidetrack young people from the battlefield of contending ideologies. This in turn would have led to spiritual isolation and the bankruptcy of the personality. The drama would have ended in physical or moral suicide.

In 1908 eighty-three young people committed suicide and in 1909—143, not counting 69 cases of attempted suicide. During one of the funerals, students of higher schools carried wreaths behind the hearse with the inscription: "Victim of arbitrary rule".

⁵⁷ V. Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 10, p. 48.

This offensive by the forces of reaction brought about grave consequences, particularly a general weakening of the revolutionary spirit among the student masses. The number of intellectuals and students in the Party sharply declined. At educational establishments the number of students sympathizing with the Social Democrats decreased. At the same time the number of students supporting the Constitutional Democrats⁵⁸ increased. The number of non-Party students showed a sharp growth. In 1909, for instance, among the students of the St. Petersburg Technological Institute the Social Democrats accounted for 25.3 per cent of the student body, the Cadets—for 20.7 per cent and non-Party students—for 15.5 per cent.

Those students who were Social Democrats belonged to the older age group and were ideologically stauncher, because they had gone through the crucible of the revolution.

The triumph of the counter-revolution plunged many of the petty-bourgeois students into a state of depression.

Many students were leaving the universities. At the time one could frequently read such advertisements in the papers: "A new university frock coat for sale at a low price". As the students left their educational establishments, they would often joke bitterly: "Politics and the higher school have been formally divorced". "Loyal" students confidently walked through the corridors of the universities. Many of them wore the badge of the League of Russian People, a Black Hundreds organization.

⁵⁸ Constitutional Democrats (Cadets)—leading party of the liberal monarchist bourgeoisie in Russia. Founded in 1905 it regarded as its main aim the struggle against the revolutionary movement. Cadets sought to share power with the Tsar and the landlords.

The Tsar came to love the Black Hundreds, "real Russian people", whose activities he officially encouraged. The sons of the gentry and merchants were wholly absorbed in risky deals and gambling scandals. Capitalist "fathers" preferred to see a boy excited by wine than by politics.

The United Social-Democratic Organization of Students of St. Petersburg was gradually compelled to discontinue its activities. Lenin saw the reasons for this in the fact that the student youth who have entered the universities after the revolution had lived a life almost completely detached from politics, and had been educated in a spirit of "narrow academic autonomism, educated not only by the professors of the Establishment and the government press but also by the liberal professors and the whole Cadet Party".⁵⁹ "Official professors", teaching in "official" way, tried to "coach" the students against the enemies of autocracy, declaring from the university rostrums that Marxism had been "refuted and annihilated".⁶⁰

The authorities, however, could not crush the students. In autumn, 1908, the students of St. Petersburg declared a strike. In the conditions of severe reaction the students' demands were timid and of a purely academic character. They demanded that women be permitted to enter higher education establishments and that student passes and police searches be abolished. The Social Democrats differed widely in their attitude to the strike. A part of the student Social Democrats were against support for the strike because of its non-political character.

On October 3, 1908, *Proletari*, a Bolshevik newspaper put out in Geneva, published an editorial by

⁵⁹ V. Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 15, p. 216.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.* p. 31.

Lenin entitled *The Student Movement and the Present Political Situation*. In the article Lenin clearly defined the Party's attitude to the struggle of the new generation of students in conditions of reaction. He sharply criticized those who were against the support for the student movement, even though it was confined within the walls of educational institutions. Lenin maintained that the student strike, though of a purely academic character, could not be ignored by the Social Democrats. Through student Social Democrats ideological influence should be exerted on the mass of the students in an organized way. It was important to support, use and extend the movement.

Lenin regarded this timid protest of the re-awakening youth as an important "political sign" of the period. "... If in the autumn," he wrote, "the mass of youth which is closest of all to the democratic bourgeoisie in Russia is beginning to be disturbed; if the hireling hacks, with malice tenfold, have started howling once more against revolution in the schools;... that means new powder has begun to accumulate in the powder-flask, it means that *not only* among students is the reaction against reaction beginning!"⁶¹

Events brilliantly confirmed Lenin's conclusions. The student strike of 1908 had been weak but it occurred during a lull in the class struggle. Deprived of the support of the proletariat, it was quickly suppressed by the government. However, it elicited considerable social repercussions, re-awakened the youth, promoted political division in its ranks, and enhanced the prestige of the Social-Democratic Party. A sizable part of the non-party students lost faith in the Cadet Party.

⁶¹ V. Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 15, p. 218.

Summing up the results of the strike in November, 1908, *Proletari* expressed confidence that following the revival of the political activity of the masses the student youth movement "would lose its naive, purely academic character to become a part of the political struggle for democracy and to merge with the struggle".

The optimism of the Bolshevik Party, its faith in the inevitable revival of the political activity of the people were corroborated by the strikes on May Day, the Day of Working People's International Solidarity. In 1908 and 1909 the workers' May Day actions swept across the big towns of Russia. The political strike in Moscow was particularly impressive. It involved five big machine works, many smaller enterprises and all the printing shops.

The working class was regaining confidence in the possibility of overthrowing tsarism, even after the grim defeat it had suffered. This spirit was infecting the students. Under working-class influence democratic students were being drawn into the struggle once again. In 1908 and 1909 brief student strikes took place in St. Petersburg, Moscow and Kharkov.

The experience of the revolutionary struggle proved that the tactics of the Bolshevik Party with respect to the students during the period of reaction and the new forms of Party work with non-proletarian youth were correct. At the same time it demonstrated that the Bolsheviks were capable of neutralizing the inevitable weakness and vacillations of young people from petty-bourgeois sections when the storms of revolution had subsided. The Party helped to overcome their extremist trends and to direct their revolutionary sentiments towards the future revolution.

LENIN ON THE ROLE OF STUDENTS IN THE STRUGGLE FOR DEMOCRACY AND SOCIALISM

By 1910 the revolutionary movement in Russia was again on the upsurge. The mounting strike movement, Lenin said, showed that the "phase of the *total* domination of the Black-Hundred reaction has come to an end. The phase of a new upsurge is beginning".⁶²

Lenin saw the signs of a new revival in the political activity of the student youth as well:

"The proletariat has begun," he wrote. "The democratic youth are continuing. The Russian people are awakening to new struggle, advancing towards a new revolution."⁶³

Leo Tolstoi always sincerely admired the courage of Russian students. In 1908 he made the following entry in his notebook: "I want to write something about the students."

In the last years of his life the distinguished writer won the special love of students by his relentless struggle for the abolition of capital punishment in Russia. Through his brilliant talents and creative efforts Leo Tolstoi, more than anybody else, contributed to the revolutionary education of young

⁶² V. Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 16, p. 357.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 358.

people. This was because all of his works were imbued with a hatred of violence and injustice.

Early in the morning of November 7, 1910, when the great writer was on his death bed, the Minister for Education took special measures against possible student action in connection with the expected death of Leo Tolstoi. He circulated a coded telegram to the inspectors of educational areas. In Moscow and St. Petersburg the troops were standing by. They marched through the streets to the bravura tunes of military bands. In the meantime violent ferment in the masses was rising. It was about to erupt at any moment.

There was unrest among the workers and students as soon as the news of the writer's death reached them. On November 9 St. Petersburg students held a demonstration near the university in which over 3,000 people took part.

On November 11 the trams and all other traffic stopped in Nevski Prospekt. Some of the factories and plants stopped work. Red banners were hoisted in the centre of the city. Big columns of workers and students marched along the Prospekt carrying flags and slogans: "Down with the butchers!", "Abolish capital punishment!" At least 10,000 took part in this impressive procession. That same day demonstrations were held in other districts of the capital. At the university the police attacked and dispersed the young marchers.

After the grim years of reaction and the lull in the class struggle St. Petersburg again saw the working class and the student youth standing shoulder to shoulder. The city saw that the working class was not dispirited. The reactionary press sounded the alarm in an attempt to frighten the philistines with the new signs of rebellion and revolution.

As the revolutionary movement was on the upsurge, it was necessary to give it effective Party guidance. The 6th All-Russia Conference of the RSDLP held in Prague in January, 1912, outlined Party tactics for the new conditions and set forth ways and means for the restoration and strengthening of Party organizations. In Lenin's resolution *The Tasks of the Party in the Present Situation*, the conference took note of the effect of student strikes on the growth of the revolutionary struggle of the masses against the tsarist regime. It also pointed to the need "more than ever before" to take advantage "of all and every legal possibility" ⁶⁴ for the advancement of Party work.

The revolutionary upsurge awakened broad masses of people to political life. Revolutionary speeches were openly made in the streets. Exploiting the interest of the people in politics the bourgeoisie started to print a large number of so-called papers for workers. Their secret aim was to sidetrack the masses from another revolution. In these conditions it was urgently necessary to start publishing a mass Bolshevik daily. *Pravda* became this newspaper. It began to be published in St. Petersburg in spring, 1912. The paper became a vital legal centre for the political education of the masses, including the revolutionary students.

Carrying on in the tradition of Lenin's *Iskra*, the paper paid special attention to the student movement, above all "from the standpoint of the development of the workers' democratic movement", ⁶⁵ and the revolutionary class interests of the proletariat. Many prominent Party leaders, who had studied at higher education establishments and who were com-

⁶⁴ V. Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 17, p. 456.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, Vol. 18, p. 188.

petent in the subject of student life, were among its contributors.

Students played a big part in distributing the newspaper. Every day student Bolsheviks distributed from 50 to 100 copies at several St. Petersburg educational establishments alone. Sometimes, by sending a student cap around a crowd of students before lectures, they collected several hundred roubles for the *Pravda* fund. St. Petersburg students were particularly skilful in distributing the Bolshevik paper among workers.

The student youth regarded *Pravda* as their own paper, and sought support from it. They wanted it to give a truthful account of student life and sent many letters to the editors. The students of Moscow University wrote to *Pravda* in May, 1912, about the harassment of progressive-minded students by Black Hundred professors. They bitterly complained about "scholars" who devoted their lectures to ridiculing students who had taken part in the revolution.

Although Lenin was far away from home in Crakow, he effectively guided the paper, met its correspondents, contributed articles, and eagerly kept abreast of the student movement. During this time S. I. Petrikovski, a student Bolshevik, performed the role of liaison officer between Lenin and the St. Petersburg Party Committee.

Petrikovski recalled that Lenin exhibited special interest in the student movement. He would ask Petrikovski about the frame of mind of the youth, about the revolutionary work of student Bolsheviks at St. Petersburg university and give advice on the organization of Party work among proletarians and students. To increase Bolshevik influence among the students Lenin proposed to create a Party journal for them to fight opportunism in the student movement.

Lenin's advice served as an ideological beacon for Petrikovski in his Party work, especially in 1914, when he headed the Bolshevik organization of St. Petersburg university.

In analyzing the revolutionary spirit of the students Lenin felt that their "left-wing organizations" lacked a clear-cut Party line. In autumn, 1912, he wrote an article *The Question of Party Affiliation Among Democratic Minded Students* in which he clearly set forth the tasks of student Bolsheviks in their work with young people in the concrete historical situation. He emphasized the need for a small, but strong, Bolshevik nucleus in the country's educational establishments to join forces with those of the democratic masses on the basis of a clear-cut political platform.

In December, 1912, a group of school pupils was arrested during a meeting held on the premises of a private gymnasium in St. Petersburg. After a prolonged search and humiliating treatment by the police, 35 pupils were taken to a political police station under heavy guard. The arrest was followed by searches at the homes of their parents and at all gymnasiums in the city. A special conference of secondary school directors examined the question of political disloyalty of schoolchildren. The results of the inquiry conducted at the secret police headquarters were urgently reported to the Minister for Education. Those arrested were severely punished. They were expelled from the gymnasiums without the right to return and some were even exiled.

These events were given wide publicity. The reactionary press did its utmost to frighten the ordinary person by giving a grim picture of the rebellious intentions of gymnasium students.

What was behind this hullabaloo? What was its true political aim? Lenin considered that it demon-

strated above all the mortal fear of the bourgeois parties of the growing political activity of the youth. In his article *An Increasing Discrepancy* Lenin analyzed the bourgeois political parties' attitude to the youth and drew the conclusion that they all considered it harmful to enter politics at an early age.

In 1914, the progressive students marked the spring with mass rallies at their educational establishments and action in support of the Bolshevik tactical slogans.

The revolutionary-minded students took an active part in workers' May Day activities. On May 18, 1914, Lenin wrote: "Congratulations on the excellent May Day celebrations in Russia: 25,000 in St. Petersburg alone!!.. Generally speaking the news from Russia is indicative of an upsurge in the revolutionary mood, and not of the working class alone."⁶⁶

Following Lenin's advice to work with the youth, young Bolsheviks led a sizable part of the democratic youth who were prepared to join the working class in the decisive assault on tsarist autocracy.

The overall upsurge of the revolutionary movement was halted in 1914 by the outbreak of the First World War.

During the war the Bolshevik Party remained faithful to the principles of proletarian internationalism. Lenin scientifically substantiated Bolshevik tactics. He put forward the slogan to defeat the national government and transform the imperialist war into a civil war of the workers and peasants against the Tsar and the capitalists.

The war gravely complicated the work of the Bolshevik Party. This was above all due to the

⁶⁶ V. Lenin, *Complete Works*, Vol. 48, Russ. Ed. p. 287.

and that the backward elements of the working class were in a state of confusion, having fallen under the influence of pseudo-patriotism. There was great excitement in the schools during those days. Numerous patriotic demonstrations were held where banners of the Tsar and national flags were carried. In the square before the Tsar's palace, which was the scene of the shooting of numerous people on January 9, 1914, hundreds of people knelt down to kiss the ground on which stood, "Save the Tsar!"

A great number of the students registered as "Socialists" such signs as "Smash Germany!" and "Everyday must go to war!" were current at educational establishments in the autumn of 1914.

In this situation Lenin paid serious attention to the pseudo-patriotic sentiments of the student youth, which had been fanned by chauvinistic propaganda.

In October, 1914, Nicholas II approved a statute of the Council of Ministers on the drafting of students into the army. Earlier they had been exempt while they were studying. The tsarist government was in a hurry to take advantage of the war to send revolutionary-minded workers to the front and to clear the higher education establishments of disloyal students. They were, therefore, urgently sent to the trenches. As for student Bolsheviks, the government made use of war time legislation to arrest, exile or mobilize them. Such measures were bound to affect the level of political consciousness of the student masses, leading to the rise of petty-bourgeois sentiments among the youth. The class consciousness of the backward part of the proletariat declined in the early period of the war, which also affected the students.

The administrators of higher education establishments deliberately kindled pseudo-patriotic senti-

ments. Bourgeois circles received many reports about professors' meetings in which denigrating speeches were made and they were clues for Nicholas II. Fundamental bourgeois circles began to look more and more like military camps. Students who had not yet seen a rifle were engaged in studying military science and tactics and the design, mastering the trade of military mechanics.

St. Petersburg university was turned into a recruitment centre and the Assembly Hall into a medical station. An infantry regiment had taken over the yard. *Soviet Democracy* (Sov. D. Demokratsi), a Bolshevik paper, on February 1, 1915, pointed to the fact that the liberal bourgeoisie was taking advantage of the favourable situation to restore "order" at the universities. "In their present frame of mind," the paper said, "the liberals can only teach their sons to sing the Black Hundred hymn and kowtow patriotically at the front doors of city governors."

It was the loyal children of the gentry and high standing officials working under the protection of professors, who were connected with the Black Hundred organization, who became the surveyors of Tsarist policy at the higher schools. Their respectable, super-patriotic meetings, with the singing of the National Anthem and prayers for the glory of the Russian throne and arms, frequently ended in fights with democratic students.

The defeats suffered by the Tsarist army on the battlefield, the food shortage, the crisis and sky-rocketing prices contributed to the students' political awakening. The "upsurge of patriotic sentiments" in the first year of the war caused the main mass of students to lose their revolutionary spirit temporarily but, as Lenin wrote, the hardships of the war and the political bankruptcy of Tsarism were

inevitably bound to push the petty bourgeoisie and, therefore, the students to the left ⁶⁷

The politically active sections of the working class which, as Lenin said, had "proved immune to chauvinism" ⁶⁸ produced a sobering effect on the youth. They were the most active opponents of chauvinism and militarism.

Quickly discarding their chauvinistic sentiments the democratic students again became allies of the proletariat in its fight against tsarist autocracy. The number of student volunteers decreased steadily. Out of 169 students at the Petrograd Polytechnical Institute drafted into the army in March, 1916, only 17 were volunteers. The rest were sent to the front through the procedure of drawing lots. In October, 1916, out of 421 draftees only one was a volunteer.

The sharp decline in "patriotic sentiments" was due both to the dispelling of petty bourgeois illusions through personal experience and to the selfless propaganda work conducted by the Bolsheviks among the democratic sections of the population, especially among the student youth. Lenin's article *On the National Pride of the Great Russians* played an important role in the political education of progressive minded students. The article was a reply to the frenzied slander spread by bourgeois hack writers and social chauvinists that the Bolsheviks were "anti patriotic." Lenin convincingly showed that those who hypocritically used the slogan of a "defence of the fatherland" as a cover were not true patriots. The real patriotic force in the country were the Bolsheviks who were fighting against autocracy, which oppressed dozens of nationalities, for the real emancipation of the working people. He

⁶⁷ See V. Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 21, p. 418.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.* p. 319.

called on the Marxists to equip the masses with ideas of proletarian internationalism, consistent democracy, national equality, and the right of nations to self determination.

The bourgeoisie was unable to win over the democratic youth to its side. Guchkov, leader of the upper bourgeoisie, complained: "Instead of a purified patriotic atmosphere which we had every right to expect from a successful war, we obtained a thick, grim and embittered atmosphere, an atmosphere imbued with hatred, mistrust and a profound contempt for authority." In September-October, 1914, the Petrograd Bolsheviks renewed the activities of illegal student organizations in practically all higher education establishments in the capital. Early in October, the Bolshevik organization at the university, which had 25 members, resumed its activities.

In November, the United Committee of Social-Democratic Factions of Higher Education Establishments of Petrograd was active again. On November 27, 1914, the chief of the Petrograd Secret Police Department reported: "Student Leninists have organized illegal Party groups in a number of local higher education establishments. All these groups have united and created a common centre."

The United Committee energetically began publishing. It managed to preserve its printing shop till the February Revolution of 1917.

It printed anti-war leaflets, reprinted separate issues of illegal papers, Lenin's articles, and appeals to workers, soldiers and students.

On Lenin's instructions student Bolsheviks combined underground work with legal work. Legal youth organizations were formed under their leadership, which conducted anti-war propaganda. In revolutionary propaganda work among the broad mas-

ses of the student youth the student Bolsheviks took account of the rising protest in that section of the youth, which was experiencing the first political conflict in their lives. This conflict was the product of the imperialist war. As Lenin put it, "like every crisis in the life of individuals or in the history of nations, war oppresses and breaks some, steels and enlightens others".⁶⁹

In Petrograd the legal group *Burevestnik* (Petrel) was the organization which worked with new members. It was made up of students, young workers and recruits.

In Moscow the student Bolsheviks grouped around the legal youth organization, known as Student House. It sought to unite the student movement in the city. The student Bolsheviks won the bulk of the membership of Student House over to their side. On November 15, 1916, there was a conference of representatives of all higher education establishments in Moscow held at Student House. During the conference the police searched Student House and found illegal Bolshevik literature, including the Manifesto of the RSDLP Central Committee, a leaflet of the United Committee of the Petrograd students "To Comrades Entering the Army", and photographs of the Bolshevik deputies in the Duma.

In their revolutionary work in student organizations the Bolsheviks not only took into account different political views but the students' capacity for mastering Marxist-Leninist theory. Student Bolsheviks simultaneously conducted vigorous legal and illegal work at a public dining hall in Malaya Serpukhovskaya Street, commonly referred to as the "stolovka" ("canteen"), widely patronized by students. After receiving their political baptism in the

⁶⁹ V. Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 23, p. 22.

"stolovka" radical minded students enthusiastically sang revolutionary songs and organized concerts with a revolutionary content. At the same time in the back rooms of the "stolovka" hot disputes took place on political topics and reports and theses were heard. Student Bolsheviks held their meetings there. The dining hall was not only a club for the revolutionary youth, but also a secret place where Bolshevik students met, aids to illegal work were stored and suspects could hide from the police.

As the revolution approached, the ideological-political division among the students became marked. The more class-conscious section that chose to follow the Bolshevik Party clearly took shape. Opportunistic trends in the petty-bourgeois mass of students were also inevitable. Lenin believed that, as far as the proletariat was concerned, the working-class movement would incalculably benefit if history were to start a preliminary purge of its ranks and, hence, the ranks of its allies "on the eve of the socialist revolution, not during its course".⁷⁰

⁷⁰ V. Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 21, p. 422.

CONCLUSION

By the beginning of 1917 Russia was already on the threshold of another revolution. The time for an open confrontation with autocracy was approaching. All the political forces had come into action. The revolutionary situation was ripening in the country.

Large, fierce strikes influenced the mood of the democratic sections of society and a wave of universal discontent rose. It was caused by the military defeat of tsarism, the high cost of living and a shortage of prime necessities. People were shocked by the speculation and swindles in which financial tycoons were involved.

Lenin said that the second bourgeois democratic revolution in Russia would be distinguished from those of Western Europe by a higher level of organization and political activity on the part of the masses. The proletariat was to play a leading role in it. Without stopping at the bourgeois democratic stage of the revolution it was to lead the masses to a triumphant socialist revolution.

In the context of mounting protest against the policy of autocracy, the Bolsheviki followed Lenin's instructions that the revolution should know exactly

whom it could go into battle with, who was an unreliable ally and who was a real enemy.

The Party organizations were still sparing no efforts to win over the democratic students to the side of the proletariat. This conformed to Lenin's thesis that progressive students could play an active role in the overthrow of the exploiting system only in close contact with the working class under the guidance of the Communist Party.

Though politically the students were a motley mass, this did not daunt the Bolshevik Party. The students reflected the views and sentiments of the social sections and political groupings that existed in Russia at the time.

The advanced section of students retained the glorious traditions of 1905 and, therefore, were in the forefront of the fight against autocracy. However, among the democratic students who formed the revolutionary opposition, not all went wholly over to the ideological position of the proletariat. At all stages of the revolution the non-proletarian petty-bourgeois nature of a sizable part of the student mass was distinctly evident. This manifested itself above all in its vacillations between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. It was not accidental, therefore, that Lenin urged the Bolsheviks to help the weak petty-bourgeois Democrats and to wrest them from the influence of the liberals. Lenin's instructions were particularly valid in late 1916 and early 1917, when relations between the bourgeoisie and the government became aggravated.

Early in 1917 the discontent of the people, the wave of strikes and the final bankruptcy of autocracy pushed democratic students leftward. With the maximalism of the young they plunged into the revolutionary storm that was about to break out.

A month and a half before the second bourgeois-

democratic revolution in Russia, on January 9, 1917, Lenin delivered a report on the 1905 revolution to an audience of young workers assembled at the People's House in Zurich. He attached special importance to this report. It was not only young workers who came to listen to the leader of the Russian proletariat. Nadezhda Krupskaya, his wife and comrade-in-arms, recalled that at the time Zurich was a refuge and centre for students from many countries, including Russia, who ardently opposed the imperialist war. According to Krupskaya Lenin "wanted to bring home to them as fully as possible the experience of the workers' revolutionary struggle and the significance of the Moscow uprising".⁷¹

In his report Lenin showed the epoch-making role of the proletariat in the liberation movement, while at the same time dealing with the history of the struggle the Russian students were waging against tsarism. Characterizing the main landmarks of this struggle—from riots by individual students to acts of mass heroism by democratic students, allies of the proletariat in the First Russian Revolution—he vigorously urged the young people to devote all their efforts to the triumph of socialist ideals. Addressing the young people he prophesied forthcoming revolution.

"We must not be deceived by the present grave-like stillness in Europe," he said. "Europe is pregnant with revolution."⁷²

He predicted that the youth "will be fortunate enough not only to fight, but also to win, in the coming proletarian revolution".⁷³

⁷¹ N. K. Krupskaya, *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Moscow, 1968, Russ. Ed., p. 286.

⁷² V. Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 23, p. 253.

⁷³ *Ibid.*

Lenin did not conceive of the new bourgeois revolution in Russia without the participation of the petty bourgeoisie "with all its prejudices". To think differently, he wrote, would be "*to repudiate social revolution*".⁷⁴ He proposed that the Party should "*combine the struggle for democracy and the struggle for the socialist revolution, subordinating the first to the second*".⁷⁵

Having accumulated a wealth of experience in work with the masses, the Party successfully solved this task. It rallied round itself the working class and the revolutionary-democratic camp and turned a movement of many thousands of people into a movement of millions. The most advanced section of progressive students sided with the Bolsheviks.

At the beginning of the 1916/1917 academic year it was already clear that a large mass of students sympathized with Bolshevik tactics. In September, practically all the educational establishments of Moscow held a one-day strike in protest against the trial of student Bolsheviks arrested for organizing anti-government actions. The strike was supported by Student House and other legal organizations. The organized mass character of this strike indicated the major success of the Bolsheviks in legal youth organizations, where, as the tsarist police reported, the Bolsheviks were preparing the democratic students for the approaching revolution.

The Bolshevik paper *Sotsial Demokrat* wrote in January, 1917: "There is no sign of loyal monarchist sentiments among the students at all."

On January 9, 1917, the Bolshevik organizations of Petrograd and Moscow decided to mark the 12th anniversary of Bloody Sunday with mass strikes

⁷⁴ V. Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 22, p. 355.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, Vol. 35, p. 267.

and street demonstrations. A leaflet issued by the Moscow Bolshevik Committee read in part: "Only revolutionary action of the working class under its own red banner of socialism can put an end to war and all violence."

In Petrograd 140,000 workers took part in strikes, rallies and street demonstrations. This was the biggest political mass action during the whole of the war period. As the Bureau of the RSDLP Central Committee pointed out, the workers of Petrograd enjoyed the support of the students. This day was reminiscent of the situation that preceded the revolutionary events of 1905.

In late January early February the struggle against the military police regime in Petrograd became more acute. The democratic sections of the capital's population including students, were being drawn into a decisive clash between tsarism and the proletariat. On January 13, 1917, the Petrograd Secret Police Department reported on "violent" and prolonged actions by students in protest against the existing political system.

By February 14, a considerable part of the democratic students joined the workers in their fight for Bolshevik revolutionary slogans.

Numerous student meetings were held at the university, Psychoneurological and Polytechnical Institutes and at the Higher Women's Courses. Resolutions were adopted to stop classes and to join in workers' demonstrations. Many student meetings adopted Bolshevik resolutions. On February 14, the students of the capital took part in a working people's demonstration. On that day 90,000 workers from 58 factories in Petrograd stopped work. Carrying red banners and slogans, such as "Down with war!", "Down with the government!" and "Hail the republic!" the students and workers forced their

way to Nevski Prospekt, sweeping aside police cordons. Here, in the heart of the city, in front of Cathedral of Our Lady of Kazan, a mass meeting of workers and students was held. On February 15, the police took over the university.

In these revolutionary developments Lenin was quick to notice the success of the tactical line of the Bolsheviks and the rising political activity of the population. On February 19, he wrote that "the mood of the masses is a good one, that chauvinism is clearly declining and that probably our day will come".⁷⁶

February 23, International Working Women's Day, was the first day of the February Revolution. The Bolsheviks used the occasion to hold rallies and meetings. Bolshevik speakers mainly spoke on such issues as the war, the high cost of living and the status of women. Just as in 1905, the day that the February Revolution broke out educational establishments made their lecture and assembly halls available to the working people for rallies and meetings. Large rallies with the participation of workers were held in practically all the educational establishments of Petrograd and Moscow.

The main form of struggle at this time were demonstrations, and it was the Bolsheviks who organized them. To defend the marches, to seize vital strategic points, and if necessary, to be on the offensive, combat detachments were formed. Students were active in these detachments.

February 25 was the first day of the Petrograd workers' general political strike involving 300,000 people. The ranks of the demonstrators expanded continuously. The mass participation of students in these demonstrations was enhanced by the calling

⁷⁶ V. Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 35, p. 288.

of a strike by the university students, starting with February 25, in solidarity with the workers. All other educational establishments in the capital followed suit. The Bolsheviks issued leaflets calling on the students to come out into the streets and assist the workers who were on strike. Student Cadet Party sympathizers went home. The rebellious masses actually took over the capital Empress Alexandra Fyodorovna, failing to understand the significance of the developments, wrote "This is a hooligan movement. Boys and girls are running around, crying that they have no bread. They are doing this simply to create disturbances."

When the general political strike began to turn into an armed uprising on February 26 the educational establishments were turned into military camps. Meetings were being held without stop in the lecture halls. A fierce ideological struggle was being waged to win over the young people. Sharp battles were being fought between Bolshevik speakers, on the one hand, and Mensheviks and SRs, on the other. Numerous student organizations were being formed on the spot. Medical teams, infirmaries, student combat teams and public order militia groups were set up. Special command posts were set up at educational establishments to handle arrested officers and policemen. Legal student societies that had already been won over by the Bolsheviks played an active part in the organization of students.

The newly born student combat groups went out into the streets together with the workers to engage in the fighting. They selflessly repelled the attacks of the police and troops.

Boys and girls with red arm bands, members of student medical aid groups hurried to aid the

wounded. Student nurses gave first aid in very difficult conditions at the risk of their own lives.

During the February events revolutionary propaganda among soldiers was conducted not only by experienced propagandists, but by activists of the United Social Democratic Organization of Students of Petrograd and hundreds of other students practically from all the higher education establishments in the capital.

"The honest minded part of the officer corps joined the revolution." As Lenin wrote in his *Letters from Afar*, these were young people from the *raznochintsy* (non gentry intellectuals), the petty bourgeoisie, i.e. the "fresh" elements that during the war replaced the old "die hard" officers' personnel from the gentry.⁷ Many of them entered the army directly from the universities. They brought with them a hatred for autocracy and disgust with the government state machine. Student Bolsheviks conducting propaganda work in the army, who were about the same age, exercised a revolutionary influence on them.

On February 27, 1917, workers, soldiers and young people overthrew the tsarist government and set up the Soviet of Workers' Deputies, i.e. their own body of revolutionary democratic dictatorship. Soon the bourgeoisie also created their body of power, the bourgeois Provisional Government. The aim of the latter was to stem the process of democratization in the country and to abolish the Soviets.

After the victory in February, the revolution started to develop very rapidly. The February Revolution was the historic prologue to the Great October Socialist Revolution. The first stage of the

⁷ V. Lenin *Coll. Works*, Vol. 23, pp. 306-313.

revolution had been completed. The transition to the second stage was accompanied by a complex regrouping of political forces. This process could not but affect the non proletarian students. Lenin regarded the socialist revolution not as a "pure" revolution, or a movement of a single class, but as "an outburst of mass struggle on the part of all and sundry oppressed and discontented elements. Inevitably, sections of the petty bourgeoisie and of the backward workers will participate in it. without such participation, *mass struggle is impossible*, without it *no revolution is possible* and just as inevitably will they bring into the movement their prejudices, their reactionary fantasies, their weaknesses and errors" ⁷⁸ As in the main the student youth was of petty bourgeois origin and was characterized by youthful maximalism, it was bound to manifest "passionate love" for the socialist revolution and to commit "vile betrayal", i. e. to show uncertainty and changeability of petty bourgeois feelings which Lenin repeatedly emphasized.

Examining the role of the petty bourgeoisie in a proletarian revolution from the Marxist position, Lenin set the Party the strategic task of using the inevitable vacillations of the broad sections of the petty bourgeoisie between labour and capital to achieve the victory of the working class and to rally broad sections of the people round it. The Bolsheviks also employed these tactics with respect to non proletarian students. At the socialist stage of the revolution the Party sought to distinguish clearly between the various class forces among petty bourgeois students and taught its members to tell enemies from the allies.

⁷⁸ V. Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 22, p. 336

The whirlwinds of the February Revolution stirred up the entire mass of the students. Revolutionary students left their educational establishments. Together with the proletariat they were preparing for the socialist revolution.

On April 3, Petrograd extended a hearty welcome to Lenin. Several thousands of workers, soldiers, seamen and young people waited for him at the Finland Station. He addressed them with a speech which ended with the historic words: "Hail the socialist revolution!"

On his return from exile Lenin made many speeches which inspired the masses and the youth with enthusiasm. Lenin's lecture on "War and Revolution" on June 14, 1917, in the assembly hall of the Naval School in Vassilyevski Island was attended by over 2,000 people.

In late July-early August, 1917, the 6th Congress of the RSDLP(B) was held. It played an outstanding role in preparing the triumphant socialist revolution. The Congress paid serious attention to the youth movement. It found it necessary to set proletarian youth organizations. A Congress decision stated that young workers' associations were to become a school for the ideological education and training of proletarian fighters—future Communists. They were open to forward-thinking students too.

Steeled in their struggle against autocracy, student Bolsheviks considered that their rightful place was in the ranks of the proletariat. These ardent young revolutionaries had been moulded by the Party and the working class in revolutionary struggle. Fighting shoulder to shoulder with the workers, students performed heroic feats and demonstrated their selfless devotion to the cause of the revolution. During the Great October Socialist

Revolution the best part of the students followed the Bolshevik Party to become allies of the working class in its effort to build a new society

* *

Leonid Brezhnev said "The October Revolution and the youth are inseparable concepts! Socialism has granted the rising generation every possibility for harmonious development, it has created the conditions for inspiring labour, study and active participation in social political life, in state affairs "

The immortal traditions of the revolutionary struggle of students under the leadership of the Communist Party continue to contribute to communist education and to the moulding of the personality of today's citizens

